

UTI PATIENT INFORMATION

WHAT IS A UTI?

A UTI is an infection due to a bacterial growth in the urinary tract.

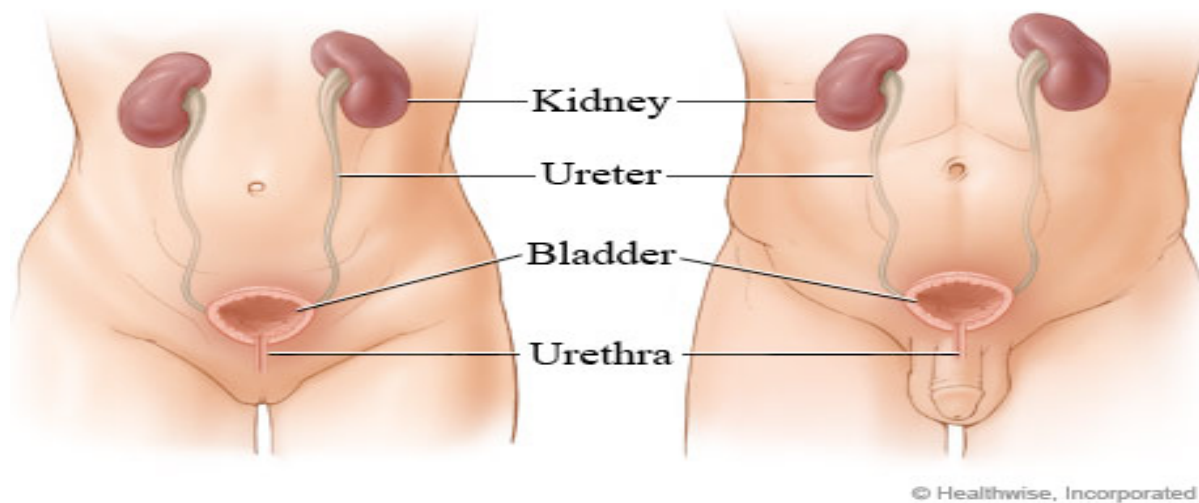
The urinary tract includes:

Kidneys: Organ that filters blood to make urine

Ureters: Tubes that connect kidneys to the bladder

Bladder: Organ that stores urine

Urethra: Tube that delivers urine to outside



The major types of infection:

Cystitis means that you have an infection in the bladder or

Pyelonephritis means that you have an infection in the kidney (usually just one side).

Bacteria in the genital area get into the urethra and travel up to the bladder or kidneys. Women have more risk because their urethra is shorter, so bacteria easily travels the shorter distance.

You are more at risk if:

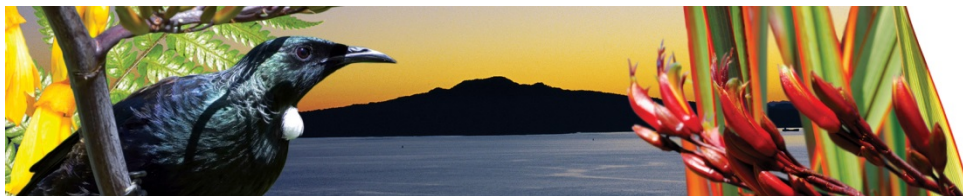
- You have diabetes or a weak immune system
- You are using a spermicide for birth control
- You have a blockage in the urinary tract (*like congenital abnormalities of the tract or renal stones*)
- You are holding your urine often
- You are having sex frequently or have a new sexual partner
- Men, if they are uncircumcised

Urine and blood tests

You will need to provide a urine sample as soon as possible. There are urine collection containers in every bathroom in the Emergency Department. There is also a 'How to collect a midstream sample' guide on the back of each bathroom door, or beside the toilet. Please make sure that you follow these steps closely – it is very important to get a true midstream sample to be able to treat you correctly.

Give the sample to your nurse.

You might also need a blood test. Your nurse or doctor will determine if you need a blood test or IV luer.



Pain Relief

There are several options available to help relieve your discomfort . Your Doctor or Clinical Nurse Specialist will discuss these with you if you have any questions.

[Please let the nurse know if you are in significant pain.](#)

Antibiotics

If you do have an infection, you will be started on antibiotic tablets. You may also receive a dose of intravenous (IV) antibiotics before you go home. Some patients may need to be admitted to the hospital for intravenous (IV) antibiotics and fluids. [Please let your nurse know of any allergies.](#)

After you leave the Emergency Department

You will be given a prescription for antibiotics when you leave if you do have an infection. Please get this filled as soon as possible. Your symptoms should begin to improve within the first 2 days of antibiotics.

You **MUST** still take all the medication to get rid of the bacteria.

[Stopping antibiotics early could cause the infection to return](#)

If your symptoms persist for more than 2 days after starting treatment, or you get worse, see your GP as soon as possible. Not all antibiotics cover all types of infection. The laboratory will confirm what antibiotics your infection is sensitive to. This takes about 48 hours. Your GP will get a copy of this result and can change the antibiotics if necessary. It is best to contact your GP for the results of the culture after 2 days.

What can you do at home to help?

[Drinking Lots of Fluids:](#)

This may help wash out bacteria from the bladder.

[Cranberry Juice or tablets:](#)

This is thought to prevent UTIs but it has never been proven in medical studies.

[Birth Control:](#)

Avoid diaphragms, spermicide or unlubricated condoms

[Change Urination Habits:](#)

Urinate whenever you have the urge, do not hold it

Urinate soon after sex to flush bacteria that may have been pushed into the urethra

After using the toilet, wipe from front to back to keep bacteria away from urethra.

When do you seek help?

[See your doctor or go to the Emergency Department immediately if you are / have:](#)

- Vomiting / unable to keep down tablets
- Worsening pain, especially in the back over your kidneys
- High fevers and / or shaking chills
- Not urinating or struggling to pass urine
- New confusion or decreased consciousness (a relative or friend will notice this)
- Collapse / fainting
- Symptoms don't improve in 2-3 days

Where to get more information

- Your family doctor or after hours medical centre
- Health line 0800 611 116