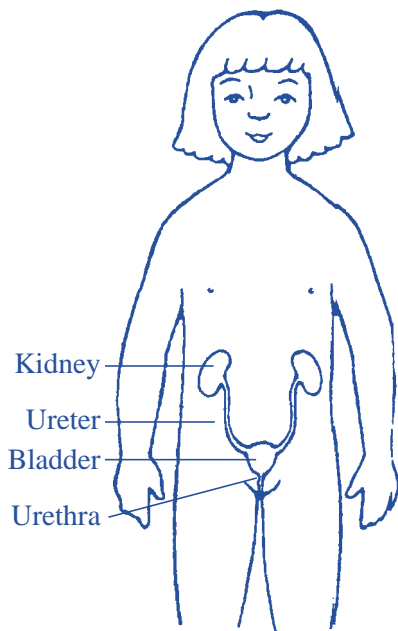


## Urinary Tract Infection

### *What is a urinary tract infection?*

Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are one of the most common bacterial diseases in children. Girls are more likely to get a UTI than boys, especially after the first few months of life because of the short urethra (tube leading from the bladder to outside of the body). Girls ages 2 to 6 are at the highest risk. Risk also increases if the child is born with a problem in the urinary tract.



### *What causes UTIs?*

UTIs are often caused by the bacteria (germs) that are found in the bowel.

### *What are the signs of a UTI?*

Signs of a UTI vary for different ages. Usually there will be a fever and trouble with urinating, however in young children, the signs may be vague. The following are some possible signs you should watch for:

### *Infants:*

- Fever
- Irritability
- Colicky (crying and flexing legs)
- Feeding problems
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Diaper rash
- Dribbling of urine or constant wetness of diaper
- Urine has a strange color or smell

### *Toddlers and young children:*

- Fever
- Crying or straining with urination
- Refusing to urinate
- Stopping urination and having a hard time starting again
- Urine is cloudy or has a bad smell
- Bedwetting in a child who usually does not

### *Older children through adulthood:*

- Fever
- Painful, burning, urgent, or frequent urination
- Pain in the lower back, flank, abdomen (belly), thighs, or groin
- Urine is cloudy or has a bad smell

### *What can I do for my child?*

It is very important to treat a UTI with a prescribed antibiotic. If it is not treated, the symptoms may go away but the germs will remain. There is a danger of kidney infection which can cause permanent damage to the kidneys. It is very important to give the antibiotic for as long as the doctor tells you. X-rays of the kidneys and bladder may also be needed to check for defects that may have caused a UTI. Discuss this with your doctor when a UTI is diagnosed.

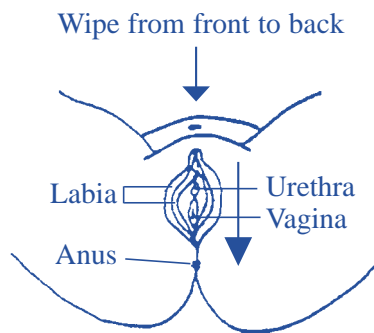
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Call your clinic to schedule an appointment for about 3 days after the antibiotic is done. Another urine test will be needed to be sure that infection is gone. An X-ray, if needed, may be scheduled at this visit.

In addition to giving the antibiotic, these health practices will help treat and may prevent UTI:

- Always wash or wipe girls from front to back. This prevents germs from stool (bowel) movements getting near the urethra. Avoid rubbing back and forth. Teach children how to do this after going to the bathroom and in the bath.



- Encourage drinking lots of fluids.
- Avoid bubble baths, shampoo, and perfumed soaps in the bath.
- Encourage young children to change underpants daily.
- Underpants should be made of cotton and should not be too tight.

- Teach children to avoid holding their urine too long. Remind them to go to the bathroom before beginning activities where bathrooms are not handy (such as car trips or playing outside).
- Sexually active females should urinate as soon as possible after intercourse to flush out germs that may have entered the urethra during sex.
- Don't use fabric softener dryer sheets.
- Avoid constipation.
- If urinating is painful, have your child sit in a bathtub of warm water and urinate directly in water.

***Call the doctor if:***

- Symptoms of a UTI continue after taking the antibiotics for 2 days.
- New symptoms develop.

***Questions?***

If you have any questions or concerns, please call your child's doctor at Pediatric Surgical Associates at (612) 813-8000 or 1-800-992-6983.