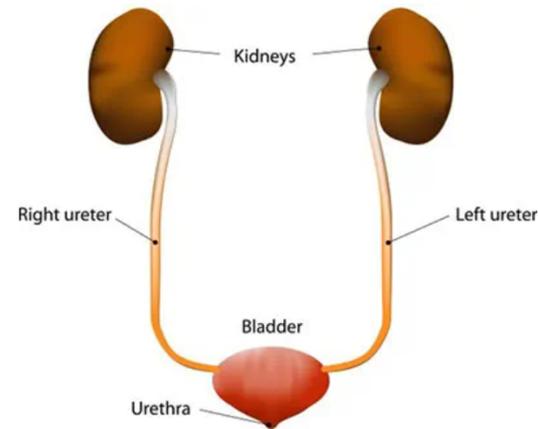




URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS (UTIs) IN FEMALE ANATOMY

A UTI occurs when bacteria grows inside the urethra, causing discomfort and pain. This condition requires diagnosis by a healthcare professional, and warrants treatment with antibiotics. Without treatment, the infection can grow further into the bladder, ureters, and kidneys, and cause serious complications.



Signs and symptoms:

- Frequent urge to urinate even when the bladder has just been emptied
- A painful or burning sensation with urination
- Blood in the urine (sometimes)

How are UTIs caused?

- UTIs are commonly caused by E. Coli, a bacteria that lives in the colon.
- People with female anatomy are more susceptible because the urethra (the tube from the bladder to the outside) is short and close to the rectum, which means bacteria can easily travel from the skin, vagina, or rectum to the bladder.

Did you know:

A urine sample is often not necessary to detect the presence of a UTI. Research has shown that the combination of pain or discomfort with urination, urgency, and frequency, without the presence of vaginal discharge, sores or external discomfort, is associated with a positive predictive value for having a UTI of over 90%.

How are UTIs treated?

- Medication(s) will be given to treat your infection. If an antibiotic is prescribed, **take all of it**. An additional medication may be prescribed if you have pain with urination.
- **Drink plenty of fluids**, about one glass every hour.
- **Cranberry juice** may help to make the urine and bladder less hospitable to bacteria. But it has to be real cranberry juice, not *cranberry juice cocktail*.
- **Avoid alcohol, caffeine products, sugar, and spicy foods** which can irritate the urinary tract

Call UHS back if:

- you experience increased pain, especially in lower back
- you develop a fever >100 °F (37.7 °C)
- vomiting begins
- you do not feel better after 48 hours on prescribed medication

Prevention:

- Urinate when you feel the need, don't hold it in for a long time.
- Take showers instead of tub baths and avoid feminine hygiene sprays and douches.
- Avoid tight pants and wear cotton underwear so perspiration can be absorbed readily.
- Drink 8-10 glasses of water per day
- Wipe front to back after using the toilet.
- If sexually active, urinate after intercourse.

Check out the latest updates and more details from **The Mayo Clinic:**

