

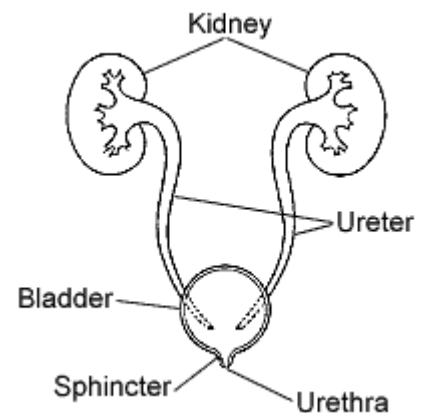


Information for You from Your Health Care Team

URINARY TRACT INFECTION IN WOMEN

What is it?

Your urinary tract is made up of the bladder, kidney and ureters. The kidneys are bean-shaped organs that remove unwanted chemicals and waste from the blood. These wastes are turned into urine by the kidneys. The kidneys are attached to the bladder by little tubes called ureters. Urine travels down the ureters and into the bladder. The bladder is a hollow organ that holds urine. When you are ready to pass urine, it travels through the urethra and out of the body.



A urinary tract infection (UTI) is an infection of the bladder, kidneys, or urethra. When the infection is in the bladder, it is called cystitis. Women may get a UTI more than once. Some women with UTIs do not have symptoms. If a UTI is not treated for months or years, the infection could hurt the kidneys.

What causes UTIs?

Germ called bacteria cause UTIs. These germs usually enter the urethra and travel up the urinary tract. The bacteria can infect the urethra, bladder, or kidneys.

Women may get a UTI by holding your urine instead of passing it when you feel the need or wiping from back to front after passing urine or a bowel movement. Something blocking a tube in the urinary tract can also cause UTIs.

What are signs of a UTI?

Call your doctor if you have any of these signs.

- Pain or burning feeling when urinating.
- Passing urine often and in small amounts.
- Dribbling or leaking urine.
- Smelly urine or urine that is pink or red.
- A fever or mid-back or side pain.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.

What can I do?

- You should pass urine when you feel the need to. Don't hold the urine in.
- You should wipe after passing urine or a bowel movement from front to back.
- You may need to take medicine to help kill the bacteria.
- Your caregiver may want you to take medicine for the fever or pain.
- You should drink plenty of liquids to keep the urine a light yellow color. This helps to wash out the bacteria.

