

How can I prevent UTIs?

- Drink plenty of fluids daily (6–8 glasses or about 48–64 oz.).
- Empty your bladder frequently.
- In post-menopausal women, your doctor might prescribe vaginal estrogen.
- Some supplements may help:
 - Oral cranberry products
 - Probiotics
 - D-Mannose
- If your UTI episodes are associated with sexual intercourse, your doctor might give you an antibiotic to take after intercourse to prevent UTIs.



Department of Urology

158 Sawgrass Drive
Rochester, NY 14620
(585) 275-2838
Fax (585) 424-1338

Division of Infectious Diseases

601 Elmwood Avenue
Ambulatory Center, 3rd floor
Rochester, NY 14642
(585) 275-0526
Fax (585) 273-1055



Recurrent Urinary Tract Infections in Women

Information for patients & families



What is a Recurrent UTI?

Recurrent UTI refers to 2 or more UTIs in 6 months or 3 or more UTIs in one year.

Women are more likely to have recurrent UTI.

Other common reasons are:

- Sexual intercourse
- Spermicide or diaphragm use
- History of UTIs at a young age
- Menopause and beyond
- Certain medical conditions such as diabetes, obesity, neurological disorders, urinary tract abnormalities, urinary stones.

What are the symptoms of UTI?

UTI may cause symptoms like:

- Burning when urinating
- Strong urge to urinate
- Need to urinate often
- Pressure in lower abdomen

UTI may also cause fever, urine leakage or worsening of chronic incontinence, pain in the back or sides, or blood in the urine.

How is a UTI diagnosed?

You need the symptoms of UTI **and** an abnormal urine test (urinalysis and urine culture).

A urine test to look for a UTI should not be done if you do not have symptoms and signs concerning for UTI.

When do I need antibiotics?

- You have symptoms of a UTI **and**
- Your urine tests positive for a UTI

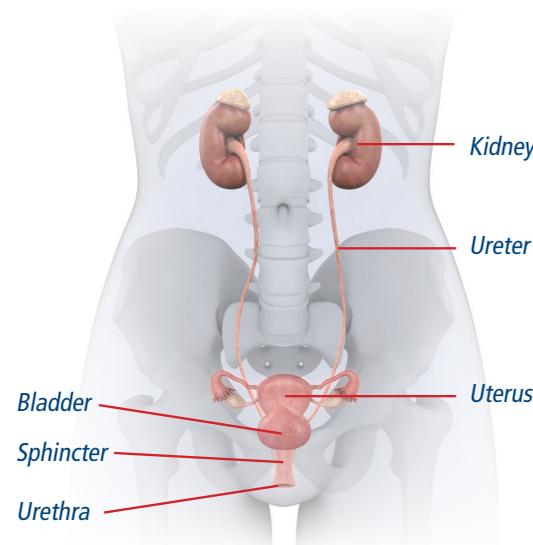
Antibiotics are **not needed every time** bacteria are found in the urine and you have no symptoms.

What if my culture result says “mixed culture?”

If a urine culture grows many different bacteria, it is generally because urine picked up skin bacteria at time of collection, and that is not further tested by the lab. In that case repeat urine tests are needed if there is still concern for UTI.

Do I need to test my urine after treatment?

If your symptoms are improved, follow-up urine tests are not needed to prove cure after you have completed a course of antibiotics for a UTI.



Why should antibiotics be avoided, if not needed?

Antibiotics have side effects:

Allergic reaction, fever, rash, nausea, vomiting, kidney damage, diarrhea.

Antibiotics increase the risk for future infections:

Antibiotics can kill “good” germs natural to our body. This can lead to a potentially fatal and severe diarrhea caused by *C. difficile*.

Antibiotics promote “stronger,” resistant germs:

Antibiotics can make germs become “drug resistant,” which means they are harder to kill with commonly used antibiotics and fewer treatment choices are available.

What are other reasons for UTI-like symptoms?

Sometimes, other symptoms can be confused with a UTI. The following symptoms do not necessarily indicate a UTI, especially if there are no other urinary symptoms or fever:

- Lower abdominal pain
- Vaginal discharge/irritation
- Cloudy/foul-smelling urine