

Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)

What is a UTI?

A Urinary tract infection (UTI) is an infection of the urinary system – the bladder, kidneys, or even the ureters or urethra. They are more common in women, people with diabetes, and more likely to affect the very young or the very old. Also men with prostate problems, and people with catheters or urinary tract abnormalities are at increased risk of developing a UTI.

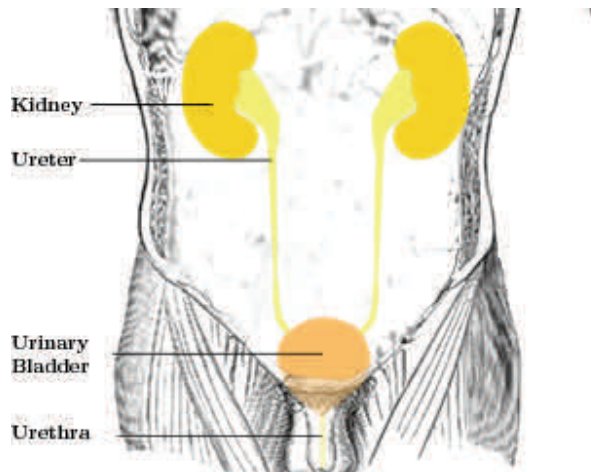
What causes a UTI?

UTIs are usually caused by bacteria. The bacteria usually enters the urinary tract from the bowel or back passage (anus), via the urethra (the tube from which urine exits the bladder).

UTIs can also be caused by sexually transmitted infections, such as Chlamydia. These can affect both men and women. If one person is diagnosed, their partner(s) will also require testing and treating to avoid re-infection and potentially serious complications.

Where are the different UTIs?

UTIs can be described by the part of the urinary tract which they affect.



Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urinary_system#/media:Urinary_tract_en.png>

Urethritis – inflammation of the urethra.

Urethritis causes pain on urination and the sensation of wanting to pass urine all the time. Often, you will pass frequent, small mounts of urine.

Cystitis – inflammation of the bladder.

Cystitis causes similar symptoms as urethritis, as well as pain in the lower abdomen.

Pyelonephritis – inflammation of the kidney.

Infections involving the kidney are more serious. Most patients with pyelonephritis feel quite unwell. You may experience:

- Fever and chills
- Pain in the loins and/or back
- Nausea and loss of appetite.

Blood in the urine is a common symptom of UTI, and can occur with any type of UTI.

Tests

A mid stream urine (**MSU**) specimen will be requested. A mid stream sample is best, as the first bit of urine that you pass may be contaminated with bacteria from the skin. Before doing an MSU, wash your hands and ideally your genitals as well.

- Women - hold open the entrance to the vagina (your labia).
- Men - pull back your foreskin. Pass some urine into the toilet. Then, without stopping the flow of urine, catch some urine in the clean (sterile) bottle, provided by a doctor or nurse. Once you have enough urine in the bottle (1/4 to 1/2 full) finish off passing the rest of your urine into the toilet.

Try to avoid touching the inside of the bottle with genitals or fingers.

The results of the MSU take 2-7 days.

