

URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS

- A urinary tract infection (UTI) is an infection in any part of your urinary system — your kidneys, ureters, bladder and urethra.
- Most infections involve the lower urinary tract — the bladder and the urethra.
- Women are at greater risk of developing a UTI than men are.
- Infection limited to your bladder can be painful and annoying. However, serious consequences can occur if a UTI spreads to your kidneys.
- Antibiotics are the typical treatment for a UTI.

WHAT MIGHT YOU EXPERIENCE IF YOU HAVE URINARY TRACT INFECTION?

- A strong, persistent urge to urinate
- A burning sensation when urinating
- Passing frequent, small amounts of urine
- Urine that appears cloudy
- Urine that appears red, bright pink or cola-colored — a sign of blood in the urine
- Strong-smelling urine
- Pelvic pain, in women
- Rectal pain, in men
- UTIs may be overlooked or mistaken for other conditions in older adults.

Types of urinary tract infection

Each type of UTI may result in more-specific signs and symptoms, depending on which part of your urinary tract is infected.

Part of urinary tract affected	Signs and symptoms
Kidneys (acute pyelonephritis)	Upper back and side (flank) pain High fever Shaking and chills Nausea Vomiting
Bladder (cystitis)	Pelvic pressure Lower abdomen discomfort Frequent, painful urination Blood in urine
Urethra (urethritis)	Burning with urination

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO TRY AND AVOID URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS?

Take these steps to reduce your risk of urinary tract infections:

- **Drink plenty of liquids, especially water. Drinking water helps dilute your urine and ensures that you'll urinate more frequently — allowing bacteria to be flushed from your urinary tract before an infection can begin.**
- **Wipe from front to back. Doing so after urinating and after a bowel movement helps prevent bacteria in the anal region from spreading to the vagina and urethra.**
- **Empty your bladder soon after intercourse. Also, drink a full glass of water to help flush bacteria.**
- **Avoid potentially irritating feminine products. Using deodorant sprays or other feminine products, such as douches and powders, in the genital area can irritate the urethra.**