



ITHACA COLLEGE

Hammond Health Center

Student Health Information Urinary Tract Infections

A urinary tract infection (UTI) is a bacterial infection in the urinary tract. This tract includes the kidneys, ureters, bladder and urethra.

Symptoms include:

- Burning sensation or pain when you urinate
- Feeling like you need to urinate more than usual
- Feeling the urge to urinate but not being able to
- Cloudy, dark, smelly or bloody urine
- Infection within the kidneys includes symptoms of fever, nausea, vomiting, chills, and back pain

What causes a UTI?

It is caused by bacteria that gets into the urinary tract. The organism most commonly responsible for UTIs is *E.coli*. This is usually found in the digestive tract and is present on the skin around the rectal area. There are other bacteria that can be involved as well. For women, the urethra is located near enough to the rectum that bacteria can easily travel up the urethra and cause infection.

How is a UTI diagnosed?

- You will be asked to give a "clean catch" urine sample which involves cleansing your genital area and collecting a mid-stream specimen in a sterile container
- The sample of urine will be tested for the presence of white blood cells or blood

How is a UTI treated?

- Taking antibiotic pills prescribed by your provider – make sure to take the entire course of antibiotics prescribed!
- Staying well-hydrated
- Taking medicine to numb the urinary tract while the antibiotics start working. This medicine contains phenazopyridine. Don't be alarmed if it makes your urine briefly bright orange

How to prevent a UTI

- Drink plenty of water daily as well as other fluids. This will dilute the urine and flush out the bacteria.
- Wipe from front to back so that bacteria from your anal area are not being pushed into the urethra or the vagina.
- Try to urinate soon after sex to wash away any bacteria that may have traveled into the urethra.
- Use plenty of lubrication during sex as bruised tissues can become irritated or infected.
- Avoid using feminine hygiene products such as sprays, deodorants and douches, which may irritate the urethra and cause changes to normal vaginal bacteria.
- Make sure to void frequently during the day.
- If you are an uncircumcised male, wash your foreskin regularly.