

Urinary Tract Infections

A Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) is an infection in any part of the urinary system, which includes the kidneys, bladder, ureters, and urethra.



Causes and Risk Factors

UTIs occur when **bacteria** enter the urinary tract, often from the **digestive system**. Aging, weakened immune systems, limited mobility, incontinence, catheter use, and dehydration can increase the risk of infection.

Types and Symptoms

UTIs can be harder to recognize in older adults, with confusion, restlessness, or behavior changes sometimes being the only symptoms. This can look like dementia in someone who doesn't have it, or make dementia symptoms worse for someone who does. UTI symptoms can also vary depending on where the infection is.

- **Kidneys:** Symptoms may include back or side pain, fever, chills, nausea, vomiting, and shaking.
- **Bladder:** Common signs include pelvic pressure, lower abdominal pain, frequent and painful urination, and blood in the urine.
- **Urethra:** A UTI in the urethra can cause a burning sensation during urination and discharge.

Prevention Tips

Drink plenty of **water**, maintain **good hygiene**, and **avoid bladder irritants** like caffeine to help prevent UTIs. If using **catheters**, make sure they are cleaned and changed properly.

Treatment Options

UTIs are usually treated with **antibiotics**. It's important to take the **full course** as prescribed. Over-the-counter pain relief and increased fluids can help manage pain. Severe cases may require hospitalization.

When to See a Doctor

Seek medical care if symptoms persist, worsen, or include **fever**, **chills**, **back pain**, or **confusion**. In older adults, untreated UTIs can lead to kidney infections or serious complications, so early treatment is crucial.