

# Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) - Prevention

*Urology Care*  
FOUNDATION™  
*The Official Foundation of the  
American Urological Association*

## WHAT IS A URINARY TRACT INFECTION?

A urinary tract infection (UTI) is a bacterial infection in any part of the urinary system — the kidneys, ureters, bladder or urethra. A bladder infection is the most common type of infection. People of any age or gender can get UTIs, but they are much more common in women. Studies show that 60% of all women will get a UTI in their lifetime. Additionally, between 20% and 40% of women will have a repeat infection. However, there are ways to prevent UTIs.

## HOW CAN YOU PREVENT A UTI?

Bacteria live all over our bodies and routinely get into our bladder. We often flush bacteria out by passing urine, which stops them from causing a UTI.

There are ways to prevent your chances of getting a UTI. To prevent a UTI, you should:

- Drink plenty of fluids (2L/day), including water, to keep well hydrated and to help flush out bacteria.
- Go to the bathroom when you need to and don't rush to finish.
- Keep your genital area clean: Uncircumcised men should retract and clean under the foreskin of the penis.
- Certain forms of birth control, such as spermicidal foam and diaphragms, are known to increase the risk of UTIs in women. Check with your health care provider about other types of birth control.

## WHEN SHOULD I CALL MY DOCTOR?

Some people may have symptoms that suggest they have a

UTI. Symptoms should never be ignored. Talk to your doctor if you have:

- Pain or burning when you pass urine.
- An urge to go to the bathroom often, even when your bladder is empty.
- Cloudy, bloody and/or foul-smelling urine.
- Pain in your lower pelvic/bladder region or lower back.

## ABOUT THE UROLOGY CARE FOUNDATION

The Urology Care Foundation is the world's leading urologic foundation – and the official foundation of the American Urological Association. We provide information for those actively managing their urologic health and those ready to make health changes. Our information is based on the American Urological Association resources and is reviewed by medical experts.

To learn more, visit the Urology Care Foundation's website, [UrologyHealth.org/UrologicConditions](https://UrologyHealth.org/UrologicConditions) or go to [UrologyHealth.org/FindAUrologist](https://UrologyHealth.org/FindAUrologist) to find a doctor near you.

## DISCLAIMER:

This information is not a tool for self-diagnosis or a substitute for professional medical advice. It is not to be used or relied on for that purpose. Please talk to your urologist or health care provider about your health concerns. Always consult a health care provider before you start or stop any treatments, including medications.

For more information about urologic conditions, visit [UrologyHealth.org/Order](https://UrologyHealth.org/Order) or call 800-828-7866.

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