

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT URINARY TRACT INFECTION (UTI)

What is a urinary tract infection?

A urinary tract infection is an infection caused by bacteria that involves any part of the urinary system including urethra, bladder, ureters and kidneys.

What are the specific symptoms of a urinary tract infection (UTI)?

- Burning pain with urination (the strongest indication of a UTI)
- Pain in the lower abdomen or back
- Increase in the frequency of urination
- Frequent urges to urinate
- Blood in the urine

Sometimes you may have a fever in addition to these symptoms.

Should a urine specimen be collected to determine if you have a urinary tract infection if you do not have symptoms of a UTI?

No. The symptoms listed above should be present prior to collecting a urine specimen.

Is a change in mental status, fatigue, or a fall a symptom of a urinary tract infection?

No. A change in mental status (i.e. confusion), fatigue (i.e. more tired), or a fall may be due to a variety of causes, including: pain, depression, constipation, dehydration, poor sleep, or medication side effects. You should be evaluated by a healthcare professional to properly assess your health status.

What is asymptomatic bacteriuria?

Asymptomatic bacteriuria is the presence of bacteria in the urine though you may not have any symptoms of urinary tract infection. Asymptomatic bacteriuria is found in up to half of long term care residents.

What is the treatment for asymptomatic bacteriuria?

None. Research has shown that there is no benefit from taking antibiotics for asymptomatic bacteriuria. It is important to drink plenty of fluids and make sure you empty your bladder completely.

Don't take antibiotics for granted.

If you use antibiotics when you don't need them, they may not work when you get sick. It is easy to see why antibiotics are helpful, and now you know why sometimes you or a family member may not need them. You can help yourself and others by taking antibiotics only when they are needed.



Asymptomatic bacteriuria is frequently mistaken for a urinary tract infection. It is important to understand the differences to avoid unnecessary use of antibiotics and potential harm.

