UTI or Urinary Tract Infection

What is it?

UTI stands for urinary tract infection. The urinary tract includes the kidneys, bladder, and the tube that takes the urine from the bladder to outside the body (the urethra). When any part of this system is infected, it is called a UTI. UTIs are usually infections of bacteria. Most germs that cause urinary tract infections come from the skin.

How would I know my child has a UTI?

Your child might have a UTI if:

Your infant:
- is irritable
- does not eat well
- throws up
- has blood in urine, urine is cloudy, or urine smells bad
- has a fever
- has belly pain
- may have no symptoms at all.
Your child or teen:
• has pain or burning when urinating
• needs to urinate more often than usual
• needs to urinate right away (urgency)
• is not able to hold urine, leaks urine, or wets the bed
• has blood in urine, urine is cloudy, or urine smells bad
• has pain in the belly, lower back, or on the side, just under the ribs
• has a fever.

Do at home:

• If you think your child may have a UTI, call the doctor right away. The urine needs to be tested for bacteria. If there is bacteria in the urine, the UTI needs to be treated with antibiotics.

• If an antibiotic is ordered, give this medicine just as your doctor ordered. Do not take it more or less often than ordered. Give this medicine every day, even if your child is feeling well until all the medicine is gone.

• Do not stop giving the medicine. If you are thinking about stopping, call your doctor first.

• Do not give any leftover medicine. A doctor needs to prescribe the right medicine for a urinary tract infection. If you give the wrong medicine, it may make it hard for the doctor to tell what is wrong with your child.

• Give your child plenty of fluids, to flush out the germs. Cranberry juice makes it harder for the germs to grow and stick to the walls of the bladder.

• After your child takes all the antibiotics, the doctor may test the urine again to see if all the germs are gone.
• Some children are born with kidney or bladder problems that make them more likely to get UTIs. The doctor may do tests to see if your child has a kidney or bladder problem.

Call the doctor or clinic right away if:

• You child throws up the medicine.
• Your child takes the antibiotic for two days and still has pain or a fever.
• Your child does not urinate.
• Your child’s urine is bloody.

You should know:

• If a UTI is not treated, the infection could spread to the kidneys. A kidney infection may need to be treated with antibiotics given by IV.

• Girls are more likely to get UTIs than boys, because their urethra to the bladder is shorter.

• Cotton underwear and pajamas let the air flow better than nylon. Air can help keep the area drier, which makes it harder for germs to grow.

• Children should urinate every 3 or 4 hours. If urine is held for 6 hours or more, the bacteria that gets into the bladder has time to grow.

• Children with constipation should be treated. Holding stool and urine are sometimes found with UTIs. (See the handout, Constipation, #8)

• To help keep your child from getting a UTI:
  — Change your baby’s diapers often.
  — Clean your baby’s bottom well after a dirty diaper.
  — Teach your child to wipe from front to back to keep germs away from the urethra.
Now that you’ve read this:

☐ Tell your child’s nurse or doctor what a UTI is, and signs of a UTI.  (Check when done.)

☐ Tell your child’s nurse or doctor how treat a child with a UTI.  (Check when done.)

If you have any questions or concerns,

☐ call your child’s doctor or    ☐ call ______________________

If you want to know more about child health and illness, visit our library at The Emily Center at Phoenix Children’s Hospital
1919 East Thomas Road
Phoenix, AZ 85016
602-933-1400
866-933-6459
www.phoenixchildrens.org
Facebook:  facebook.com/theemilycenter
Twitter:  @emilycenter
Pinterest:  pinterest.com/emilycenter

Disclaimer
The information provided at this site is intended to be general information, and is provided for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of examination, treatment, or consultation with a physician. Phoenix Children’s Hospital urges you to contact your physician with any questions you may have about a medical condition.
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Name of Reviewer: _____________________________________  Number: 
Date sent: 

Expert Review of Printed Patient/Family Teaching Material

We value and would appreciate your opinion of the enclosed patient/family teaching material. Please make your changes on the attached handout.

Overall evaluation (circle):

1. Rating of content of this teaching material:
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Fair
   - Poor

2. Rating of illustrations' demonstration of appropriate behaviors:
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Fair
   - Poor

3. Rating of the usefulness of this teaching material in clinical practice with families:
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Fair
   - Poor

Please tell us how to improve this teaching material.
Make your changes on the attached handout.

Thank you for your participation!
Please return your evaluation and the teaching material within one week to:
The Emily Center     602-933-1395
Health Education Specialist
Phoenix Children’s Hospital
1919 East Thomas Road
Phoenix, AZ 85016-7710
UTI or Urinary Tract Infection

Name of Health Care Provider: _______________________________
Date returned: ______________  ☐ db

Family Review of Handout

Health care providers: Please teach families with this handout.
Families: Please let us know what you think of this handout.

Would you say this handout is hard to read?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No
Would you say this handout is easy to read?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No
Please circle the parts of the handout that were hard to understand.

Would you say this handout is interesting to read?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No
Why or why not?

Would you do anything differently after reading this handout?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No
If yes, what?

After reading this handout, do you have any questions about the subject?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No
If yes, what?
Is there anything you don’t like about the drawings? □ Yes □ No

If yes, what?

What changes would you make in this handout to make it better or easier to understand?

Please return your review of this handout to your nurse or doctor or send it to the address below.

The Emily Center 602-933-1395
Health Education Specialist
Phoenix Children’s Hospital
1919 East Thomas Road
Phoenix, AZ 85016-7710

Thank you for helping us!