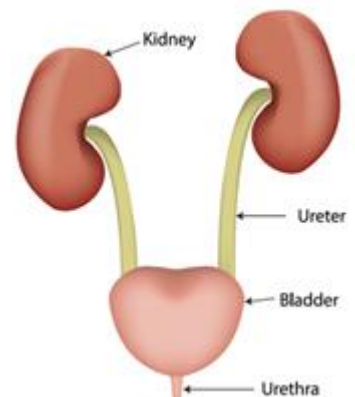


# Preventing Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs) in Children

**This leaflet offers information about ways to help prevent urinary tract infections in children. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to the staff member in charge of your child's care.**

## What is a UTI?

A UTI (Urinary Tract Infection) is inflammation of the urinary tract, caused by bacteria. Three parts make up the urinary tract: ureters (which carry urine from the kidneys to the bladder), the bladder (which stores the urine) and the urethra (which carries urine from the bladder out of the body). Bacteria can infect any part of the system. Urinary tract infections in children are common but there are several lifestyle factors that can make a child more prone to developing a urinary tract infection.



## What are the signs and symptoms?

Children can develop a variety of symptoms, including, fever, abdominal pain, dysuria (pain on passing urine), frequency (passing urine more often), urgency (unable to hold on to urine), vomiting or abnormal urinary incontinence (when previously continent).

## **Do I need any tests to confirm the diagnosis?**

Yes. A urine sample must be obtained when a child has a suspected UTI and before starting antibiotics. It should be in a sterile urine pot and ideally a midstream urine sample.

The sample should always be sent for culture to confirm the diagnosis.

## **What treatments are available?**

Antibiotics are required to treat a confirmed urine infection.

## **What happens if I do not get treatment?**

If a UTI is not treated, the bacteria can potentially spread within the urinary tract leading to kidney damage and into the blood stream causing sepsis.

## **Is there anything I can do to help my child?**

There are a few daily habits that can help reduce the risk of developing a UTI

### **1) Keep hydrated**

It is recommended that children should aim for 6-8 cups of fluid a day.

Under 5 years = 120-150mls cup

6 years and over = 250-300mls cup

### **2) Pass urine every 2-3 hours during the day**

Some children develop the habit of holding onto their urine, increasing the risk of developing urine infection.

Set a plan and encourage your child to pass urine regularly during the day both at home and at school.

### **3) Preventing Constipation**

Avoid constipation and encourage regular bowel habits by drinking plenty of fluid, eating a diet high in fibre and getting plenty of exercise. The aim should be that your

child is passing a soft stool, without straining regularly. The build-up of stool in the large bowel can raise pressure, thus blocking urine flow and leading to trapping of bacteria, promoting UTIs.

#### **4) Wipe front to back after passing stool**

Girls are much more likely to develop UTIs due to the proximity of the anus and the urethra. Wiping in the direction from front to back can prevent the spread of bacteria from stool.

#### **5) Double Void when passing urine**

Double voiding is passing urine as normal and then counting to 10 and trying to pass urine again.

This ensures the bladder is completely empty, reducing the risk of residual urine getting infected.

#### **6) Avoid bubble baths and soaps**

Bath additives such as bubble bath and soaps can irritate the skin on and around the genitalia. It is important to wash and have regular baths or showers but avoid adding anything to the water.

References:

**NHS UK Urinary tract infections (UTIs)**

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/urinary-tract-infections-UTIs](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/urinary-tract-infections-UTIs)

**NHS Scotland Inform**

[www.nhsinform.scot/campaigns/think2drink-h2o](http://www.nhsinform.scot/campaigns/think2drink-h2o)

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about preventing UTIs in your child please contact the paediatric medical secretaries on email [children.secretariesC@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:children.secretariesC@stgeorges.nhs.uk) or 020 8725 2931 (Monday to Friday 9am to 4.30pm.) If possible, please give the name of the doctor you saw. Out of hours, please leave a voice message

**For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.stgeorges.nhs.uk](http://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk)**

---

## Additional services

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

**Tel:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** [pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

### NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

**Web:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

**Tel:** 111

## AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website ([www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



**Reference:** PAE\_PUTI\_LP\_01 **Published:** August 2022 **Review date:** August 2024