

# UTI – Uncomplicated or Complicated?

A urinary tract infection (UTI) is an infection that occurs either in the bladder (more commonly) or the kidneys (less commonly). Treatment for a UTI depends on whether it is classified as “uncomplicated” or “complicated,” which is determined by your symptoms and anatomy.

	<b>Uncomplicated UTI</b>	<b>Complicated UTI</b>
<b>Symptoms</b>	<p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Painful urination</li> <li>• Urinary frequency</li> <li>• Urinary urgency: the feeling you need to urinate NOW</li> <li>• Mild blood in the urine</li> <li>• Suprapubic (front bone of the pelvis) pain</li> </ul>	<p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Painful urination</li> <li>• Urinary frequency</li> <li>• Urinary urgency: the feeling you need to urinate NOW</li> <li>• Significant blood in the urine</li> <li>• Flank (sides and back of the belly) or back pain</li> <li>• Fever or chills</li> <li>• Nausea or vomiting</li> </ul>
<b>Anatomy and Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patient has a vagina</li> <li>• No structural or functional urinary tract abnormalities (e.g., kidney stones, catheter, neurogenic bladder—a nerve problem that affects how the bladder works)</li> <li>• No history of genital surgery, including gender-affirming genital surgery</li> <li>• No poorly controlled diabetes, weak immune system, spinal cord injury or kidney disease</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patient has a penis</li> <li>• Structural or functional urinary tract abnormalities (e.g., kidney stones, catheter, neurogenic bladder—a nerve problem that affects how the bladder works)</li> <li>• History of genital surgery, including gender-affirming genital surgery</li> <li>• Poorly controlled diabetes</li> <li>• Weak immune system due to medications or disease</li> <li>• Spinal cord injury</li> <li>• Kidney disease</li> </ul>
<b>Treatment Options</b>	<p>Low risk of serious infection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A short course of oral antibiotics (1-5 days depending upon the agent) is usually effective.</li> </ul>	<p>High risk of serious infection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May need a longer course of oral antibiotics (7-14 days)</li> <li>• May need intravenous (IV) antibiotics</li> </ul>

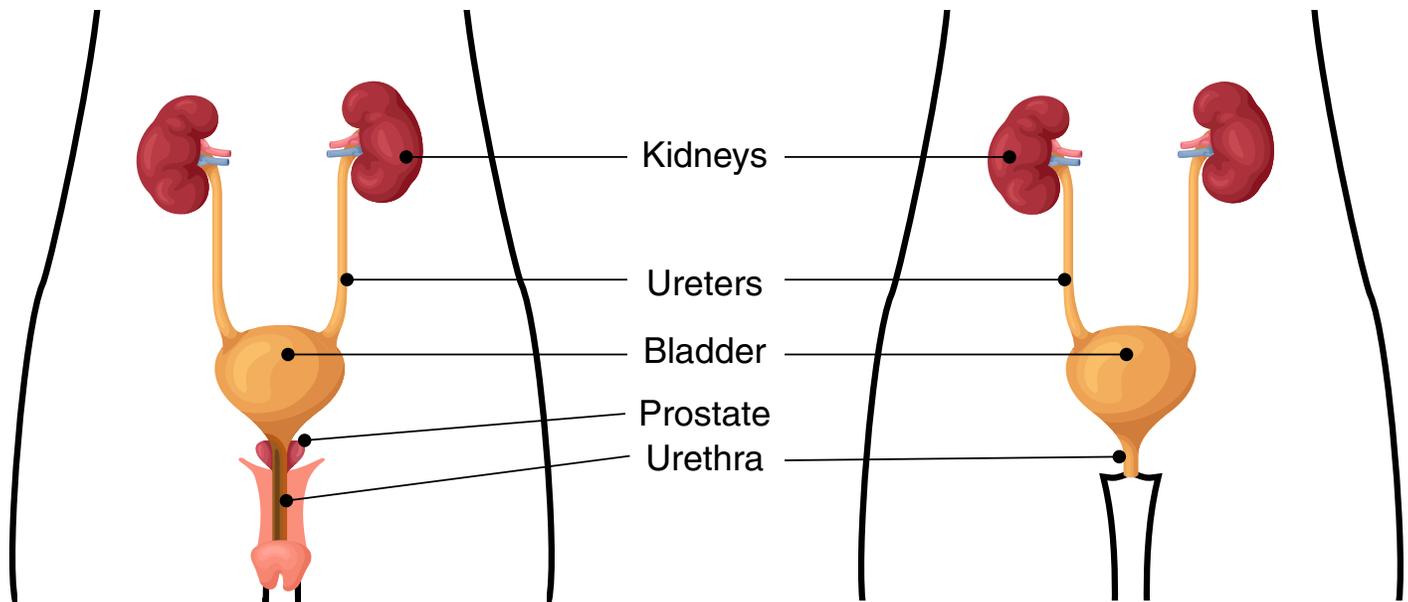
**If your UTI is considered “complicated,” you may need:**

- A referral to another health-care provider
- More testing
- A longer treatment of antibiotics
- IV antibiotics

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## URINARY SYSTEM

*Urinary tract*



**Kidneys:** remove waste and extra fluid from the blood and make urine; a UTI of the kidneys is called pyelonephritis. An infection of the kidneys is usually considered a “complicated” infection and can have serious consequences.

**Ureters:** carry urine from the kidneys to the bladder.

**Bladder:** stores urine; a UTI of the bladder is called cystitis.

**Urethra:** carries urine from the bladder to outside the body. The urethra is about 20 cm long in a person with a penis versus about 3-4 cm long in a person with a vagina. A shorter urethra increases the risk of a UTI, as bacteria from the anus or vagina can more easily enter the urethra and reach the bladder.