

TESTS & TREATMENTS FOR URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS (UTIs)



Our goal is to provide the best care possible for residents by working with residents and their families. Quality care includes not over-testing or over-treating with antibiotics.

- A UTI is an infection in the bladder or kidney – mostly in the bladder
- UTIs are caused by bacteria
- Antibiotics are used to kill bacteria that causes UTIs
- Some side effects from antibiotics include rash, diarrhea, fever, and nausea/vomiting. Antibiotics should only be used when needed.
- Treatment of UTI requires both symptoms of infection and a positive ‘urine’ test of bacteria.
- Bacteria in urine of older people is common and a completely normal part of aging.
- Bacteria in the urine without symptoms is not a UTI and do not need antibiotics.
- Sometimes other symptoms are confused with a UTI. These symptoms are often caused by other problems like dehydration or medication side effects that require different treatment.

Symptom of UTI – Order Urine Test

- ✓ Pain or burning with urination
- ✓ Pain in the lower belly
- ✓ Pain in the sides and low back
- ✓ New or sudden urine leakage
- ✓ Strong urge to urinate often
- ✓ Fever
- ✓ Blood in the urine that is new

Not a Symptom of UTI – No Urine Test

- ✓ Foul or strong urine odor
- ✓ Confusion, irritability or change in behavior
- ✓ Loss of balance
- ✓ New onset of falls
- ✓ Cloudy or dark urine
- ✓ Poor appetite
- ✓ Long standing incontinence

- If antibiotics are not indicated, the person should receive close monitoring, and extra liquids to drink, and an update in their plan of care.
- The resident and family will be kept aware of plan of care by their health care team.

References: University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, “Why Won’t Antibiotics Be Used” Developing Tools for Education and Communication Concerning Suspected UTI in Long Term Care (LTC), Poster, 2018

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