Urinary Tract Infections in children

Information for parents

This leaflet can be made available in other formats including large print, CD and Braille and in languages other than English, upon request.

What is a Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)?

A UTI is caused by bacteria (germs) getting into your child’s urine. These germs come from the bowel and pass from the anus (back passage) to the urethra (the tube which passes urine (wee) from the bladder). These germs thrive in urine and quickly multiply to cause infection. Some infections stay in the bladder, others go higher up into the kidneys.

How will I know if my child has a UTI?

The most common symptoms of a UTI include:

- pain, a burning or stinging sensation when passing urine.
- an urge to pass urine more frequently but only a very small amount may be produced.
- a temperature higher than 37.5°C (99.5°F).
- vomiting (being sick).
- tiredness and lack of energy.
- poor appetite.
- not gaining weight as expected.
- abdominal (tummy) pain.
- unpleasant smelling urine.
- cloudy urine.
- blood in urine.

Are there any risks or possible complications of a UTI?

Some children may only ever have one UTI while others may have several. Sometimes the UTI is caused by abnormal kidneys or problems with their urinary tract.

In some cases the UTI is severe enough to cause permanent damage and scarring of the kidneys. Babies under the age of 6 months who have been diagnosed with a UTI will need further tests and scans.
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What will happen while my child is in hospital?

Your child’s doctor will decide what type of antibiotics he or she will be given and for how long. Antibiotics can be given as a tablet, medicine or if needed, a cannula (a small fine tube) will be inserted into a vein. The cannula will be held in place with a dressing and bandage.

The cannula will be flushed (a saline solution is injected into the cannula) before and after medication is given. A cannula makes it easier to give any other medications, if needed.

Those who need medication through a cannula will need to stay in hospital a little longer. The treatment will depend on your child’s age and other symptoms they may have.

What scans will my child need?

You child may have 1 or all of the following scans:

- **an ultrasound scan.** If this is needed you will be given a leaflet explaining this in more detail. Not everything can be seen on this scan, for example, kidney scarring.

- **a dimercaptosuccinic acid (DMSA) scan.** If this is needed you will be given a leaflet explaining this in more detail. This scan will be carried out during an outpatient appointment.

- **a micturating cystourethrogram (MCUG) scan.** If this is needed you will be given a leaflet explaining this in more detail. This scan is also carried out during an outpatient appointment.

Will my child have any medications to take home?

Your child will usually take a course of antibiotics and later may be given a lower dose to take at night until they have been seen by the consultant.

What should I do if my child gets another UTI?

If you suspect your child has another UTI, you should contact your GP who will check your child’s urine sample.

What should I tell my child?

If your child asks about the tests being carried out, you should try to reassure them and explain in simple terms what is being done and why. If a cannula is in your child’s hand; this can be scary for them but it is important to keep it secure.
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At times it is helpful to tell stories, talk about your family or anything else that may help to take their mind off what is happening.

You should try to stay calm and comfort them, if you get upset so will your child.

If you would like more information please ask your doctor or nurse.

Contact numbers

University Hospital of North Tees

Children’s Ward
telephone: 01642 382815
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Paediatric Day Unit
telephone: 01642 624530
Monday – Friday, 8.00am – 9.00pm

Accident and Emergency Department
telephone: 01642 382899
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Further information is available from:

NHS Choices
telephone: 111 (when it is less urgent than 999)
Calls to this number are free from landlines and mobile phones
or via the website at www.nhs.uk
Comments, Concerns, Compliments or Complaints

We are continually trying to improve the services we provide.

We want to know what we’re doing well or if there’s anything which we can improve, that’s why the Patient Experience Team is here to help.

Our Patient Experience Team is here to try to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible. If you would like to contact or request a copy of our PET leaflet, please contact:

telephone: 01642 624719
Monday – Friday, 9.00 am – 4.00 pm
Messages can be left on the answering machine and will be picked up throughout the day.

freephone: 0800 092 0084
Mobile: (can use text): 0779 561 883
Email: patientexperience@nth.nhs.uk

Out of hours if you wish to speak to a senior member of Trust staff, please contact the hospital switchboard who will bleep the appropriate person.

telephone: 01642 617617
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The Patient Experience Team is available to discuss your concerns in person Monday – Friday, 1.30 pm – 4.30 pm.

Data Protection and use of patient information

The Trust has developed a Data Protection Policy in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. All of our staff respect this policy and confidentiality is adhered to at all times. If you require further information please contact the Head of Communications.

telephone: 01642 624339 or www.dataprotection.gov.uk