

## **Urinary Tract Infections in Young Children: Guidelines for Parents**

Key statistics:

- Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are common in infants and young children.
- About 3 percent of girls and 1 percent of boys will have a UTI by 11 years of age.
- A young child with a high fever and no other symptoms, has a 1 in 20 chance of having a UTI.
- The frequency of UTIs in girls is much greater than in boys.
- Uncircumcised boys have slightly more UTIs than those who have been circumcised.

**Compiled by the Men's Health Network : Washington, D.C. : [www.menshealthnetwork.org](http://www.menshealthnetwork.org)**

<http://www.aap.org/family/uti.htm> (downloaded 4-18-99)

American Academy of Pediatrics

(excerpts)

### **Urinary Tract Infections in Young Children Guidelines for Parents**

Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are common in young children. UTIs may go untreated because the symptoms may not be obvious to the child or to parents. These infections can lead to serious health problems. From this brochure, parents can learn more about urinary tract infections - what they are, how children get them, and how they are treated.

#### **The Urinary Tract**

The urinary tract makes and stores urine. It is made up of the kidneys, ureters, bladder, and the urethra (see illustration). The kidneys produce urine. Urine travels from the kidneys down two narrow tubes called the ureters to the bladder. The bladder is a thin muscular bag that stores urine until it is time to empty urine out of the body. When it is time to empty the bladder, a muscle at the the bottom of the bladder relaxes. Urine then flows out of the body through a tube, called the urethra. The opening of the urethra is at the end of the penis in boys and above the vaginal opening in girls.

#### **Urinary Tract Infections**

Normal urine has no germs (bacteria). However, bacteria can get into the urinary tract from two sources: the skin around the rectum and genitals and the bloodstream from other parts of the body. Bacteria may cause infections in any or all parts of the urinary tract, including the following:

- the urethra (called "urethritis")
- the bladder (called "cystitis")
- the kidneys (called "pyelonephritis")

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