



## URINARY TRACT INFECTION

### ABOUT THE DISEASE

A **urinary tract infection (UTI)** is a general term referencing any infection present within the entire urinary tract (kidneys, bladder, ureters, urethra). However, most commonly, it refers to an infection of the urinary bladder. Also known as **infectious urocystitis**. **UTIs** can affect both canine and feline patients and are seen most commonly in female patients.

Some symptoms of a **UTI** may include:

- Straining to urinate (stranguria)
- Increased frequency of urination, while urinating small amounts at one time (pollakiuria)
  - This is not to be confused with an increased frequency of urination, with large amounts of urine (polyuria)
- Blood in the urine (hematuria)
- Painful urination (dysuria)

There are often several different risk factors for the development of **UTIs**, but other diseases will predispose development of an infection as well. The most common predisposing diseases include:

- Urinary crystals
- Urinary bladder stones (uroliths)
- Urinary bladder cancer
- Spontaneous inflammation (idiopathic cystitis)
- Kidney infection (pyelonephritis)

Please see the documents on these diseases for additional information.

### OBTAINING A DIAGNOSIS

A urinalysis is the diagnostic of choice for determining a **urinary tract infection**.

Ultrasound is the diagnostic of choice for finding the presence of urinary sediment (crystals, stones), bladder wall changes (cancer), as well as to obtain a sterile sample of urine for testing.

X-rays (radiographs) are rarely an effective tool.

A urine culture and sensitivity may be utilized in cases that are poorly responding to antibiotic therapy. With this test, the bacteria are grown at a reference laboratory to help guide antibiotic therapy. However, even with bacteria found in-clinic, there is a 25% chance of bacterial growth at the reference laboratory. While a culture and sensitivity can help guide therapy, it should not be the sole criteria to stop treating a patient with distinctive symptoms.

### TREATMENT

The treatment of a **UTI** is often driven at pain relief, anti-inflammation, and appropriate antibiotics. While a urine culture and sensitivity may be helpful, typically one or a combination of antibiotics are utilized to treat the infectious bacteria.

Depending on the presence of any other underlying disease, other treatments, surgeries, or prescription foods may be required to treat and prevent infections from recurring.

### TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Diagnosing an underlying disease is imperative to ensure effective treatment from the beginning.
- Many people just want to treat and see what happens, but this often leads to relapses and a failure to manage an underlying disease that is affecting the patient's quality of life.