



Prescribing Guidelines for Urinary Tract Infections

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Urinary Tract Infections in Children

Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are common infections of childhood that may affect any part of the urinary tract, from the urethra to the kidneys. The following guidance will focus on treating uncomplicated UTIs with an appropriate narrow spectrum antibiotic for the shortest effective duration. Infections in children with underlying renal diseases, anatomic or functional anomalies of the urinary tract, urinary catheters, or immunocompromising conditions/therapies constitute complicated UTIs and must be approached on an individual basis. For additional guidance on the diagnosis and management of UTIs, please refer to the [UTI Clinical Pathway](#), developed by Nationwide Children's Hospital.

General Management and Treatment

1. Start by obtaining an appropriate urine sample for urinalysis and urine culture. Urine culture should be performed if urinalysis is positive or if there is a high clinical suspicion for infection.
 - a. Clean-catch urine specimens should be obtained in all toilet trained children. While bagged urine samples can be used for initial urinalysis, catheterization is recommended to obtain appropriate samples for urine cultures in pre-toilet trained children.
2. Decide whether empiric antibiotic therapy for presumed UTI is warranted, and prescribe the most appropriate empiric therapy for the optimal duration (see Table 1).
 - a. Does the child have presumed cystitis or pyelonephritis?
 - i. These symptoms suggest pyelonephritis and it is recommended to treat empirically if present: Fever, vomiting, flank pain, or costovertebral angle tenderness.
 - ii. Children without signs or symptoms of pyelonephritis: Consider waiting for urine culture results to make a definitive diagnosis and optimal management.
 - b. Has the child had prior culture-confirmed UTIs to guide empiric therapy?
 - i. Previous urine culture results and susceptibilities may help guide the choice of empiric therapy.

Table 1: Empiric Antibiotic Therapy


Suspected Diagnosis	Age Range	Preferred Antibiotic*
Bacterial Cystitis	<12 years	Cephalexin 25 mg/kg/dose BID x 3 days (max 500 mg/dose)
	≥12 years	Nitrofurantoin macrocrystal/monohydrate 100 mg BID x 3 days ^c
Pyelonephritis	<12 years	Cephalexin 25 mg/kg/dose TID x 7 days (max 1000 mg/dose) ^b
	≥12 years	Cephalexin 1000 mg TID x 7 days ^b

a. Preferred empiric antibiotic choices are based on commonly recovered pathogens, antimicrobial susceptibility patterns at Nationwide Children's Hospital, and drug penetration into sites of infection. It is recommended to review local resistance patterns and antibiograms for susceptibility in your area

b. See cefdinir dosing in 'Culture Directed Therapy' if cephalexin is not an option due to adherence concerns

c. Cephalexin 500 mg BID x 3 days is an alternative therapy if nitrofurantoin is not an option

Table 2: Culture-directed Therapy

Spectrum	Antibiotic	Dose	Frequency and Duration	
			Cystitis	Pyelonephritis
Most Preferred  Least Preferred	Nitrofurantoin ^a	100 mg/dose (adult dose)	BID x 3 days	Do NOT Use
	Amoxicillin	20 mg/kg/dose (max 875 mg/dose)	BID x 3 days	TID x 7 days
	Cephalexin	25 mg/kg/dose	BID x 3 days (max 500 mg/dose)	TID x 7 days (max 1000 mg/dose)
	TMP/SMX	4 mg/kg/dose (max 160 mg/dose)	BID x 3 days	BID x 7 days
	Cefdinir	7 mg/kg/dose (max 300 mg/dose)	BID x 3 days	BID x 7 days
	Amoxicillin/ Clavulanate ^b	20 mg/kg/dose (max 875 mg/dose) ^b	BID x 3 days	TID x 7 days
	Ciprofloxacin	15 mg/kg/dose (max 750 mg/dose)	BID x 3 days	BID x 7 days

a. Macrocrystal/Monohydrate (age ≥12 years). Use for cystitis only; Nitrofurantoin should NOT be used for Pyelonephritis/Febrile UTI

b. Dose based on amoxicillin component. Use products with 7:1 ratio of amoxicillin to clavulanate below:
 Suspension: 400 mg/57 mg/5 mL | Tablet: 875 mg/125 mg | Chewable tablet: 400 mg/57 mg

3. Follow-up of urine culture results

- a. For follow-up management, adjust the antibiotic therapy as indicated depending on the results of the urine culture and susceptibilities (see Table 2). If the urine culture does not suggest a UTI, stop the antibiotic and consider other diagnoses.
- b. For children who improve with treatment, test-of-cure urine cultures are NOT routinely recommended.

4. For children who do not improve within 48-72 hours of appropriate antibiotic therapy, consider obtaining a renal/bladder ultrasound to evaluate for complications such as renal or perirenal abscess.

5. When to refer:

- a. Consider referral to Pediatric Urology for further evaluation of children with recurrent UTIs, abnormal renal/bladder ultrasound results, or symptoms of voiding dysfunction when not infected (urgency, frequency, enuresis).



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Referrals and Consultations

Online: [NationwideChildrens.org/Urology](https://www.NationwideChildrens.org/Urology)

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