

## Urinary Tract Infection: Prevention

The body gets rid of liquid waste products through the urinary system. To keep the kidneys working well, it is important to protect this system from infection. Picture 1 shows the urinary system inside the body.

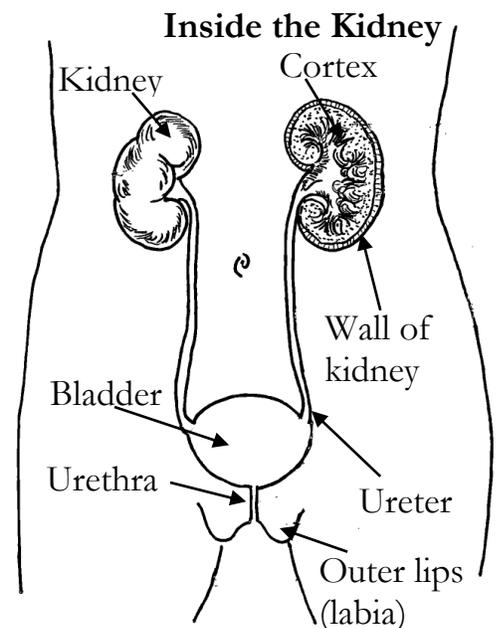
### How to Prevent Urinary Tract Infection

- Bubble bath products, detergents, shampoos or shower gels **should not be used** in bath water because they can irritate the urinary opening.
- Do not use colored or scented toilet paper.
- Teach your child to go to the bathroom and empty the urinary bladder as soon as the urge is felt, rather than trying to hold the urine in.
- Drinking plenty of liquids, especially water, (6 to 8 glasses a day) will help "flush out" wastes from the urinary system.
- Children should be taught to keep their genital area clean and to change their underwear every day.

### Special Tips for Girls

Girls need to take special care to protect the urinary system from bacteria (germs) because the opening to the bladder is so close to the opening to the intestines. Also, the urethra (the tube leading to the bladder) is shorter in girls than in boys.

- After using the toilet, your child should always wipe from **front to back**. If this is not done, bacteria from the bowel movement material can get into the opening where the urine comes out and cause an infection.
- If your child has an accident (soils or wets her underpants), the skin area should be cleaned and the underpants changed as soon as possible to keep bacteria away from the urinary opening.
- It is best for your child to wear underpants made of cotton rather than synthetic materials. Cotton allows the air to flow more freely. This helps to keep the area around the urinary opening dry. Germs do not multiply as fast in a dry area as they do in a moist area.



**Picture 1** The urinary system inside the body.

## How the Urinary System Works

The blood in the body passes through the kidneys. The kidneys filter the liquid waste products out of the blood (Picture 1, page 1). This liquid (urine) passes through the ureters and into the bladder. When the bladder is full, the child has an urge to urinate (pass water), and the waste products pass out of the body through the urinary opening.

## When to Call Your Primary Doctor

Call your child's doctor if any of the following occurs:

- Urine becomes red or changes to a dark color.
- It is difficult or painful for your child to urinate.
- Sudden or frequent need to urinate.
- Pain in the lower back just below the ribs.
- Temperature over 101°F by mouth.
- Abdominal (belly) pain.
- Change in the smell of urine - strong or foul smelling.

## Medicine

If medicine has been prescribed by your doctor, it must be taken as directed. Your child should not stop taking the medicine without your doctor's advice, even if he or she seems better.

Do not give your child outdated prescriptions or medicines that have not been prescribed for this urinary tract infection.

If you have any questions, please ask your doctor or nurse, or call\_\_\_\_\_.