

## **PREVENTING URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS . . . UTIs**

UTIs begin when bacteria from outside the body climb up the urethra into the bladder. UTIs are very common during pregnancy. The increases of pregnancy hormones affect the muscles of the urinary tract, causing it to work slower and making it more difficult to empty the bladder completely. This allows bacteria more time to multiply. Meanwhile, the growing uterus puts more pressure on the bladder, causing irritation that can encourage infection.

### ***Prevention of UTIs***

- Drink plenty of fluids throughout the day and urinate as soon as you feel the urge; bacteria breed more easily and rapidly in concentrated and help urine.
- Drink 5-6 cups of Nettle tea or infusion every week during the last trimester to strengthen the kidneys.
- Wear cotton underwear or go without; try avoiding synthetic (polyester) underwear as these create a warm, moist environment for bacteria.
- Avoid sugary drinks and foods
- Wipe from front to back, and urinate after intercourse; bacteria are easily transferred to the bladder from the rectum and surrounding tissues.

### ***What are the signs of UTI?***

- Pain when urinating
- Burning when urinating
- Lower back pain
- Kidney pain
- Fever
- Chills
- Nausea
- Blood or pus in the urine

If you notice any of these symptoms, it is important to let us know. You should immediately start following the preventative measures listed next:

- Force fluids, especially water: 10-12 glasses a day, or at least 1 large glass an hour
- Always wipe from front to back to avoid introducing bacteria from the rectum into the urethra.
- Wear white, cotton underwear.
- Bath daily
- Urinate often and completely

- Urinate before and after sex to rinse any bacteria that may have been pushed into the urethra.
- Drink unsweetened cranberry juice or take cranberry tablets.
- Drink water with unsweetened lemon juice.
- Eat foods high in Vitamin C (oranges, strawberries, onions, broccoli, cantaloupe, chile) or take 1000 mg. of Vitamin C daily.

*Some remedies for UTI:*

\*Cranberry Juice. The juice must be unsweetened (no sweetener whatsoever or else it won't help). At the first sign of a UTI, drink an 8-ounce glass every hour for 12 hours. Unsweetened cranberry juice or concentrate from health food stores, or prepare your own "juice" by blending a handful of fresh or frozen berries with a cup of water in your blender. Warning: it is sour!!

\* D-Mannose 1,000 mgs 3X's daily for 14 days

\* Vitamin C will acidify the urine and help by "washing" out the bacteria.

Doses of up to 250 mg per hour may be used. Just know that large doses of vitamin C may cause loose stools.

*If you have symptoms of UTI, we may ask you to see a doctor. Sometimes, the doctor may prescribe antibiotics depending on the results of urine test called a urinalysis. If you chose to follow this treatment, it will be essential that you take the entire treatment of antibiotics as your doctor prescribes it so that the bacteria do not become resistant. After you are finished with treatment, your urine will once again be tested to make sure the infection is cured. There is also another type of analysis called a "culture and sensitivity test" that a doctor may do to find out exactly which type of bacteria is present.*

*Some things to do while being treated for UTI with antibiotics:*

- ❑ Take ALL the antibiotics doctor prescribes
- ❑ Continue with natural prevention measures
- ❑ Eat plain yogurt with live cultures (lactobacilli) daily
- ❑ Insert plain yogurt with live cultures into your vagina daily with your fingers. This will help prevent vaginal infections (*Monilia*) that often result from antibiotics.