

# Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs) in Dogs and Cats

## Understanding UTIs: A Guide for Pet Owners

At Franktown Animal Clinic, we know how much you care about your pet's health and well-being. Urinary tract infections (UTIs) can cause discomfort and serious complications if left untreated. Our goal is to help you recognize the signs early and provide the best care to keep your pet happy and healthy.

**Why is it Important to Check for UTIs?** Untreated UTIs can lead to serious health issues, including kidney infections or the formation of bladder stones. Early diagnosis and treatment ensure your pet's comfort and long-term health.

**Symptoms to Watch for at Home** If your pet is experiencing a UTI, they may show one or more of the following signs:

- Frequent urination
- Straining to urinate
- Accidents in the house or outside the litter box
- Blood in the urine
- Foul-smelling or cloudy urine
- Licking around the urinary area
- Signs of pain or discomfort when urinating
- Increased thirst
- Lethargy (in severe cases)

**What to Expect if You Think Your Pet Has a UTI**, we will:

- Perform a **physical exam** to assess their overall health.
- Request that you bring in a **urine sample** from home or attempt to collect one in the clinic.
- Conduct a **urinalysis** to check for signs of infection.
- If necessary, send a **urine culture** to identify bacteria and determine the best treatment.
- Prescribe **antibiotics or other medications** if a UTI is confirmed to relieve symptoms and clear the infection.

**Preventing UTIs in Pets** While UTIs are not always preventable, there are steps you can take to reduce the risk:

- Ensure your pet has constant access to fresh water to promote regular urination.
- Take your dog out for frequent bathroom breaks and keep litter boxes clean for cats.
- Provide a balanced diet that supports urinary health.
- Maintain proper hygiene, especially for long-haired pets.
- Monitor for any underlying conditions, such as diabetes or kidney disease, that could predispose your pet to UTIs.

## How is a UTI Treated?

- **Antibiotics:** If bacteria are present, an appropriate antibiotic is prescribed.
- **Pain Management:** Anti-inflammatory medications may be given to relieve discomfort.

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- **Increased Hydration:** Encouraging water intake can help flush bacteria from the urinary tract.
- **Dietary Changes:** If necessary, a prescription urinary diet may be recommended to prevent recurrent infections and support bladder health.
- **Addressing Underlying Causes:** If a UTI is due to an underlying condition, additional treatments may be required.


**When Do We Recommend a Urine Culture?** A **urine culture** is recommended in the following situations:

- If the UTI is recurrent or does not respond to initial antibiotic treatment.
- If the urinalysis shows significant bacterial presence.
- In pets with underlying conditions that increase the risk of resistant infections.
- If blood is present in the urine without an obvious cause.

If you suspect your pet may have a UTI or if you have any concerns about their urinary health, please contact us at:

**Franktown Animal Clinic**

 7658 Burning Tree Drive, Franktown, CO 80116

 303-688-4690

 [www.franktownanimalclinic.com](http://www.franktownanimalclinic.com)

We are here to help keep your pets happy and healthy!

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