**URINARY TRACT INFECTION (U.T.I)**

A urinary tract infection (U.T.I) is an infection in any part of your urinary system. This can be your kidneys, ureters, bladder, and urethra. Most infections involve the lower urinary tract - the bladder and the urethra.

It is a known fact that women are more prone to U.T.I's than men due to the smaller distance between the urethra.

Infection limited to your bladder can be very painful and annoying. however, if the infection spreads to the kidneys it can have serious consequences.

Urinary tract infections do not always cause signs and symptoms but if they do, they may include:

* A strong persistent urge to urinate.
* A burning sensation when urinating.
* Passing frequent, small amounts of urine.
* Urine that appears cloudy.
* Urine that appears red, bright pink or the colour of cola is a sign of blood in the urine.
* Strong smelling urine.
* Pelvic pain in women - especially in the centre of the pelvis and around the area of the pubic bone.

People can become confused; loss of mobility and their personality can change as a result of a U.T.I. GET TO KNOW THE CLIENT SO YOU CAN SEE ANY CHANGES.

**HOW TO PREVENT A U.T.I. INFECTION?**

* Empty your bladder frequently as soon as you feel the need to go. make

sure, you have completely emptied your bladder when doing so.

* Wipe from front to back.
* Drink plenty of water/fluids.
* Choose showers over baths.
* Stay away from female hygiene sprays, scented douches, and scented bath products. These will only increase irritation.
* Clean your genital area before sex.
* Urinate after sex. This is to flush away any bacteria that may have entered the urethra.
* Keep your genital area dry by wearing cotton underwear and loose-fitting clothes.
* Avoid tight jeans and nylon underwear, they can trap moisture, creating the perfect environment for bacteria growth.

I am sure by now you are thinking that all of this will not apply to our clients but a U.T.I can happen to anyone. Us as carers are very guilty of not going to the bathroom as often as we need to, and we tend to hold it in. We have a way of actually forgetting to go to the bathroom. This is to be avoided. As much as we want our client's to be as healthy as possible, we also want our care team to be as healthy as possible. Make sure that you monitor our clients but also use the good practises on yourselves.