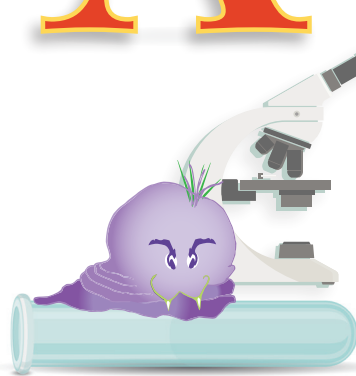


The ABC's of Antibiotics

A

sk

“Are these antibiotics necessary?”
“What can I do to feel better?”



B

acteria

Antibiotics do not kill viruses.
They only kill bacteria.



C

omplete the Course

Take all of your antibiotics
exactly as prescribed
(**even** if you are feeling better).

Do not pressure your healthcare provider for antibiotics.



You do **not** need antibiotics for:

- ✗ Colds or flu;
- ✗ Most coughs and bronchitis;
- ✗ Sore throats not caused by strep;
- ✗ Runny noses; or
- ✗ Most ear aches.

Using antibiotics the wrong way can
cause bacteria to grow into superbugs.

This could make your next infection
much harder to treat.

Infection Prevention *and You*



APIC

Association for Professionals in
Infection Control and Epidemiology

Learn more about antibiotic resistance at
apic.org/infectionpreventionandyou and
cdc.gov/getsmart.

What you should know about antibiotic resistance

Did you know?

Antibiotics are drugs used to treat bacterial infections. Using antibiotics the wrong way can lead to antibiotic-resistant infections. Each year in the United States, at least 2 million people get serious infections with bacteria that are resistant to one or more of the antibiotics designed to treat those infections. At least 23,000 people die each year as a direct result of these antibiotic-resistant infections.¹ And this is why healthcare providers are being more careful when prescribing antibiotics.

What is antibiotic resistance?

Antibiotic resistance happens when bacteria change in a way that reduces or eliminates the ability of antibiotics to kill the bacteria.

How can I help prevent antibiotic resistance?

- ✓ Take antibiotics exactly as your healthcare provider instructs.
- ✓ Only take antibiotics prescribed for you.
- ✗ Do not save antibiotics for the next illness or share them with others.
- ✗ Do not pressure your healthcare provider for antibiotics.

1 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Antibiotic Resistance Threats in the United States, 2013.

Top 5 questions you can ask your healthcare provider about antibiotics:

1. “Do I really need an antibiotic?”
2. “Can I get better without this antibiotic?”
3. “What side effects or drug interactions can I expect?”
4. “What side effects should I report to you?”
5. “How do you know what kind of infection I have? I understand that antibiotics won’t work for viral infections.”

Infection Prevention *and* You