



Antibiotics - a National Treasure

- FACT:** If medicines called antibiotics are not used properly or used when they are not needed, bacteria can mutate and develop resistance to the antibiotics. Then these medicines may no longer help us.
- FACT:** This is a big problem, and is a major public health threat within hospitals and communities — wherever antibiotics are used.
- FACT:** Antibiotics **only** work against infections caused by bacteria, **not** infections caused by viruses.
- FACT:** Illnesses that are caused by viruses are: colds, flu (or influenza). An illness caused by bacteria is strep throat.
- FACT:** Public health officials are asking us all to know when antibiotics work, and to know when and how to use them.

In which illnessare antibiotics needed ?

Cold	No
Flu	No
Chest cold (in otherwise healthy children & adults)	No
Sore Throats (except strep throat)	No
Bronchitis (in otherwise healthy children & adults)	No
Runny Nose (with clear discharge)*	No
Fluid in Middle Ear (otitis media with effusion)	No

(From Centers for Disease Control)

* discharge from a runny nose due to colds or flu will often turn from a clear/neutral color to yellowish as the cold is resolving. If a greenish or yellowish discharge from your nose persists, see your doctor.

What You Can Do to Help Check Antibiotic Resistance?

- Don't insist on an antibiotic when your doctor says one is not right for you. Ask how to relieve your symptoms.
- Do not take an antibiotic for a viral infection such as a cold, a cough, or the flu.
- Take medicine exactly as your health-care provider tells you. If he or she prescribes an antibiotic, take it all until it is gone, even if you're feeling better.
- Don't take leftover antibiotics, and don't take antibiotics prescribed for someone else. These antibiotics may not be right for your current symptoms. Taking the wrong medicine could delay getting the right medicine and may allow bacteria to grow.