



When used correctly,
antibiotics are useful
and important
medicines.

Work with your doctor
to use antibiotics only
when they are
needed.



**To avoid the threat of
antibiotic-resistant infections
the Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
recommends that you avoid
unnecessary antibiotics.**

If you have a viral infection, such as a cold or
the flu, taking an antibiotic...

- ...will **not** cure the infection
- ...will **not** keep others from
catching your illness
- ...will **not** help you feel better,
but
- ...will increase your risk of
antibiotic resistant infection.

Use antibiotics wisely.
*Talk to your doctor or
pharmacist about the right
medicines for your illness.*



CDC does not endorse any
commercial products or services.

A new threat to your health: Antibiotic Resistance

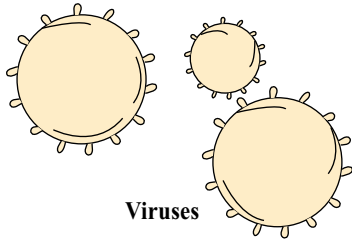


WARNING:
Unnecessary Antibiotics
CAN Be Harmful

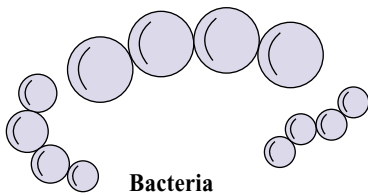
American Society for Microbiology
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

You do not need antibiotics to fight a cold or the flu.

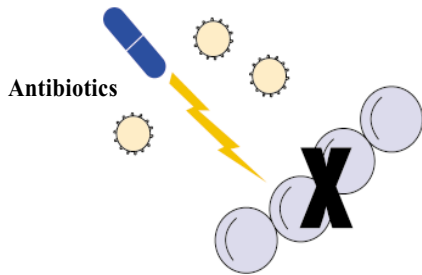
When you are sick your illness may be caused by *bacteria* or *viruses*.



Illnesses caused by *viruses*, like colds or the flu, will not be helped at all by antibiotics.



Illnesses caused by *bacteria*, like strep throat, can be treated with antibiotics.



Antibiotics kill bacteria, not viruses.

Taking antibiotics when you *do not* need them can cause antibiotics not to work when you *do* need them.

Antibiotics kill bacteria. Some bacteria can defend themselves against antibiotics. These bacteria are called antibiotic resistant. Infection with antibiotic-resistant bacteria may be more difficult to treat and may spread to friends and family.

Some infections, such as strep throat, are best treated with antibiotics. However, taking antibiotics when you don't need them, such as for a cold or the flu, can increase your risk of getting a resistant infection.



“ I need an antibiotic so I can get back to work quickly. ”

If you have a cold or the flu, antibiotics will not help you feel better faster or keep the illness from spreading. The infection will be less likely to spread to others if you avoid close contact and wash your hands frequently.

“ But in the past I've taken antibiotics for similar colds and flu and haven't gotten a resistant infection. ”

Antibiotic resistance is a new threat to your health. It is now important to use antibiotics only when they are needed. Your doctor will ask you questions and examine you to find the cause of your illness, then give you the proper care.

