

Antibiotics

Know the facts

- Antibiotics are life-saving drugs when used wisely.
- Antibiotics treat infections caused by bacteria. They do not work on viruses that cause colds and flu.
- Each year, almost 2 million people in the U.S. become infected with bacteria that antibiotics can't treat. These bacteria no longer respond to antibiotics. At least 23,000 people die each year from these infections.
- A reaction to an antibiotic may require a visit to the ER, especially for kids.
- Antibiotics also kill good bacteria in your body. This may lead to other problems like diarrhea or yeast infections.

life-saving

treat infections

use wisely

When do you really need an antibiotic?

Antibiotics are powerful drugs for fighting infections. They don't work for every sickness. This chart shows when you may need one.

Bronchitis (in healthy children and adults)	✓	✓	May be recommended
Cold or runny nose	✓		No
Ear infection	✓	✓	May be recommended
Flu	✓		No
Fluid in the middle ear	✓		No
Sinus infection	✓	✓	May be recommended
Sore throat (except strep)	✓		No
Strep throat		✓	Yes
Urinary tract infection		✓	Yes

Questions to ask when you are given an antibiotic: