

Use antibiotics wisely

Using antibiotics wisely will help slow the spread of resistant bacteria. This will help keep our life-saving antibiotics effective for years to come.

Illness	Usual cause		Antibiotic needed?
	Virus	Bacteria	
Colds and flu	✓		No
Runny nose	✓		No
Cough	✓		No
Bronchitis	✓		No
Sinus infection	✓	✓	Maybe
Ear infection	✓	✓	Maybe
Pneumonia	✓	✓	Usually
Strep throat		✓	Yes

Help prevent infection by staying healthy

- Wash your hands often
- Stay up to date on pneumonia and flu vaccinations
- Exercise
- Eat healthy foods
- Get plenty of sleep at night

You can make a difference

Help stop the spread of antibiotic resistance!



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Antibiotics are not always the answer



Oregon
Health
Authority

PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION
Acute & Communicable Disease Prevention

Antibiotics kill bacteria NOT viruses

- Taking antibiotics when they are not needed helps resistant bacteria to grow
- Resistant bacteria can cause serious illnesses that are difficult and costly to treat
- Highly resistant bacteria sometimes cause infections that can't be cured

What if you are prescribed an antibiotic for a bacterial infection?

- Be sure to take EVERY dose as prescribed even if symptoms go away
- NEVER share antibiotics or save them for later



Your doctor can tell you when you need an antibiotic and write a prescription.

Help your body fight infections

- Get plenty of rest
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Avoid smoking, secondhand smoke and other air pollutants
- Acetaminophen, ibuprofen or naproxen can be used to relieve pain or fever

Always see a health care provider for:

- Temperature higher than 104°
- Symptoms that are not relieved by over-the-counter medications

Illness	Average length of illness	Self-care methods
Cold	10–15 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a humidifier or cool mist vaporizer• Use a decongestant or saline nasal spray
Sore throat	2–10 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soothe a sore throat with ice chips, cold drinks, popsicles, smoothies or milkshakes• Use a humidifier or cool mist vaporizer• Use lozenges
Cough	10–24 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A teaspoon of honey can be used to loosen the cough• Use a humidifier or cool mist vaporizer or breathe steam from a bowl of hot water or shower• Use lozenges
Sinus infection	7–14 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a warm compress over the nose and forehead to relieve pressure• Use a decongestant or saline nasal rinse or spray
Ear infection	7–8 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a warm moist cloth over the ear that hurts