

Talk to Your Patients about Antibiotic Resistance.

WHAT IS THE RISK?

Antibiotic resistance accounts for more than 2.8 million infections and 35,000 deaths annually in the U.S.



Being a good antibiotic steward means protecting your patients and the public from antibiotic resistance by prescribing antibiotics **only when needed**, and prescribing the **right drug** at the **right dosage** for the **right duration**.

How Do We Properly Talk to Patients about Antibiotic Use?

To ensure clear, effective communication, clinicians can utilize the following communication strategies and examples to engage with their patients*:

1. Deliver a clear diagnosis that explains why antibiotics are not needed.

Ex) “This is a nasty cold, and colds are caused by viruses, so antibiotics won’t make you feel better faster.”

2. Utilize positive treatment recommendations.

Ex) “Putting a warm compress over your nose and taking ibuprofen will help with your sinus pain and pressure.”

3. Develop contingency plans.

Ex) “If your child is still sick in a week or develops a fever, come back and see me.”

4. Delay antibiotic prescriptions.

Ex) “Your child has an ear infection that will likely clear up on its own. If the ear still hurts in two days or gets worse, call me or schedule an appointment so we can recheck the ear.”

*These steps were adapted from a CDC editorial published in 8/1/16, issue of American Family Physician. [How to Prescribe Fewer Unnecessary Antibiotics: Talking Points That Work with Patients and Their Families](https://www.aafp.org/afp/2016/0801/p200.html) (<https://www.aafp.org/afp/2016/0801/p200.html>).