

Antibiotics: Safe use of antibiotics

The correct use of antibiotics helps to protect against more deadly germs.

- Antibiotics won't help if your child has a cold or flu.
- Taking antibiotics when they aren't really needed can be harmful. Like all medications, antibiotics have side effects, such as stomach upset or rashes, and should not be taken unless they are really necessary.
- Each time your child takes antibiotics, he or she is more likely to develop resistant germs.
- If your child gets infected with resistant germs, he or she might need to take more expensive antibiotics or have to be hospitalized to get a medication.

When does my child need antibiotics?

- Your health care provider is the best person to decide whether or not your child needs antibiotics.
- When your child has a cough, sore throat or cold, he or she may have a viral or bacterial infection.
- Your health care provider can tell which kind of infection your child has and whether he or she needs antibiotics.

If an antibiotic is prescribed:

- Make sure you give your child the antibiotic every day for the total number of days your health care provider prescribes it.
- Never give your child leftover antibiotics that have not been prescribed for him or her.



Prevention:

- Handwashing is the best way to prevent the spread of illness.
- Immunizations can prevent many serious childhood diseases.

For more information

For more information about the growing problem of antibiotic resistance, visit: www.healthoregon.org/antibiotics or www.cdc.gov/getsmart

Get smart about antibiotics



Illness	Usual Causes		Antibiotics needed?
	Virus	Bacteria	
Colds & flu	●		No
Runny nose	●		No
Cough	●		No
Bronchitis	●		No
Sinus infection	●	●	Maybe
Ear infection	●	●	Maybe
Pneumonia	●	●	Usually
Strep Throat		●	Yes

Oregon Alliance Working for Antibiotic Resistance Education (Oregon AWARE)