

Rx

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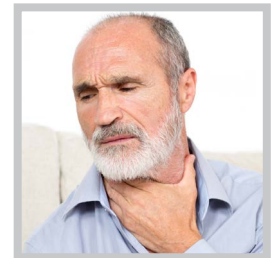
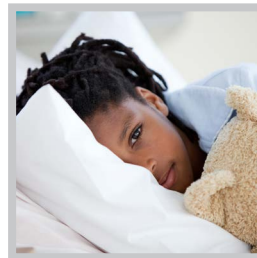
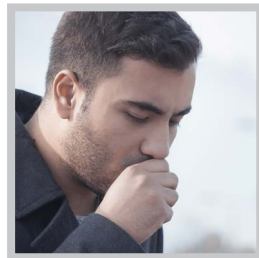
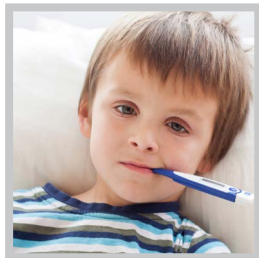
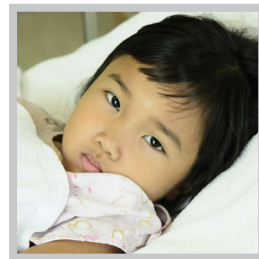
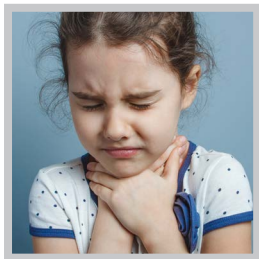
Antibiotics

When Good Things Go Bad

When you or your loved one is sick with a sore throat or cold, you might go to the doctor expecting a prescription for an antibiotic.

If you leave the office empty handed, chances are you're surprised or even disappointed that the doctor didn't write a prescription.

But don't be. Your doctor may be saving you or your loved one's life.



Increasingly patients are faced with antibiotic resistance, called "one of the world's most pressing public health problems" by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Every year in the United States about two million people contract a bacteria that is resistant to antibiotics, and at least 23,000 of those people die because of the bacteria.

Overuse and misuse of antibiotics can promote the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, which are bacteria able to resist the effects of an antibiotic.

Antibiotic resistance occurs when bacteria change in a way that reduces the effectiveness of drugs or chemicals to cure or prevent infections. The bacteria survive and continue to multiply, causing more harm: infections often last longer, cause more severe illness, require more doctor visits or extended hospital stays, and involve more expensive and toxic medications. Some resistant infections can even cause death. To control antibiotic resistance, the CDC urges doctors and patients to use antibiotics appropriately.

Usually, infections caused by bacteria, such as strep throat and urinary tract infections, are treated effectively with antibiotics. However, antibiotics do not fight viral diseases like colds, the flu, most sore throats, bronchitis and most ear infections.

Is it a bacteria or a virus?

Antibiotics only treat bacterial infections. Viral illnesses cannot be treated with antibiotics. Follow this chart to learn which health concerns require antibiotic treatment.

Illness	Usual Cause		Antibiotic Needed
	Viruses	Bacteria	
Cold/Runny Nose	✓		NO
Bronchitis/Chest Cold <i>(in otherwise healthy children)</i>	✓		NO
Whooping Cough		✓	Yes
Flu	✓		NO
Strep Throat		✓	Yes
Sore Throat <i>(except strep)</i>	✓		NO
Fluid in the Middle Ear <i>(otitis media with effusion)</i>	✓		NO
Urinary Tract Infection		✓	Yes

Source: www.cdc.gov/getsmart

Protect Yourself and Your Family



When you are sick, don't demand that your doctor prescribe an antibiotic. They usually work for bacterial infections, not viral infections.



Ask your provider if there are steps you can take to feel better without using antibiotics.



Never take an antibiotic that is not prescribed to you or use leftover antibiotics from a past illness.



Don't skip doses of medication.



Follow doctor's orders for how long to take the medicine.



Get regular vaccinations that are updated for the most current form of the bacteria. Vaccines are responsible for the control of many infectious diseases that were once common, like polio, measles, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), rubella (German measles), mumps and tetanus.



Wash your hands before eating, after using the restroom and after handling uncooked food to reduce the spread of diarrheal and respiratory illness. If soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.

To learn more about the overuse of antibiotics, visit www.northoaks.tv/antibiotics or the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/features/AntibioticResistanceThreats/index.html.