

Antibiotic Resistance

Will antibiotics work for me?



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Antibiotics are **not always** needed. When antibiotics are taken, they affect gut bacteria. These bacteria can become **resistant** to the antibiotics taken. Antibiotic resistance means the antibiotics can **no longer kill** that bacteria in future nasty infections. Antibiotics do have nasty **side effects** such as thrush, rashes, vomiting and diarrhoea. Taking antibiotics now when you don't need them means they might **not work** when you do need them.

Antibiotics <u>WON'T</u> help	Antibiotics <u>CAN SOMETIMES</u> help
Common examples are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Common Cold• The Flu• COVID-19• Sore Throat• Coughs	Common examples are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chest Infection• UTI• Kidney Infections• Ear Infections• Cellulitis

What are Antibiotics?

Antibiotics are medicines that **help** your body's immune system fight off **bacterial infections**. They help to slow the growth of the bacteria, which makes it easier for your immune system to fight the infection. When you use them, the bacteria in the infection can become **resistant** to them.

When do I need Antibiotics?

Most **bacterial infections** will clear on their own in around 3-10 days without antibiotics. If you have **symptoms** of a bacterial infection that are especially bad or have **got worse** recently, talk to your GP and they might prescribe you antibiotics to help. Try **self-help** remedies first (**see below for information**)

Why do I not need them?

Your body's **immune system** is very good at fighting infections on its own. Using **antibiotics** every time might **not help** and can sometimes cause unwanted **side effects**. It can also make bacteria **resistant** to antibiotics, meaning they might **not work** if you need them in the future.

- **Common Cold** –10-14 days — Fluids, rest, decongestants— **NO Antibiotics**
- **Flu**—7 days — Fluids, rest, paracetamol—**NO Antibiotics**
- **COVID-19** —2-10 days — Fluids, rest, paracetamol, cough syrup—**NO Antibiotics**
- **Ear Infection**—3-7 days — Paracetamol, warm flannel on ear, keeping ear dry—Severe Bacterial = **CAN use Antibiotics**
- **Tonsillitis**—3-7 days — Rest, cold drinks, paracetamol, gargle salt water, lozenges — Bacterial = **CAN use Antibiotics**
Viral = **NO Antibiotics**
- **UTI**—3-7 days — Paracetamol, hot water bottle, fluids, cranberry juice—**Antibiotics if SEVERE**
- **Chest Infection**—7-10 days — Rest, fluids, paracetamol, decongestants — Bacterial = **Antibiotics if SEVERE**
Viral = **NO Antibiotics**