

## Commonly asked questions

### How can I help fight antibiotic-resistant bacteria?

- 1) Let your doctor decide when antibiotics are needed.
- 2) If given antibiotics, take all of the medicine. Call your doctor if you are having trouble taking it.
- 3) Prevent disease with handwashing and cleanliness.

### How do I know if my child has a viral or bacterial infection?

- 1) You cannot tell the difference between bacteria and viruses just by looking.
- 2) Your doctor will determine the need for antibiotics based on symptoms, exam, and/or lab tests.
- 3) Remember that the common cold is always caused by viruses. They do not need antibiotics.

### Why should I worry about antibiotic-resistant infections?

- 1) When antibiotics are misused, the germs that make you sick may develop drug resistance.
- 2) Once antibiotics can no longer kill the germs, even minor infections may become life threatening.

**When your child is sick, antibiotics are not always the answer.**

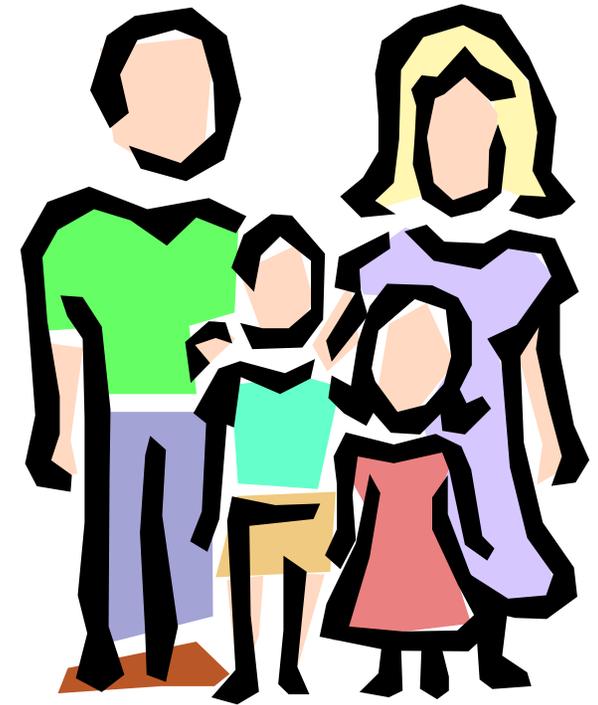
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2005

This project was supported by the Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Infectious Disease Cooperative Agreement # U50/CCU723678-01-1.

# Your Child and Antibiotics



**Antibiotics that are not needed CAN be harmful.**

## Antibiotics, bacteria and viruses.

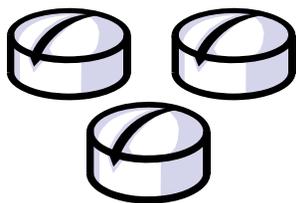
Antibiotics are drugs that kill bacteria. They do not kill viruses. Viruses cause all colds, most sore throats, and most ear infections. When antibiotics are used for viruses they won't make you feel better. Your child recovers from viral infections when the illness has run its course.

**Antibiotics kill only bacteria, not viruses.**

## Resistant bacteria.

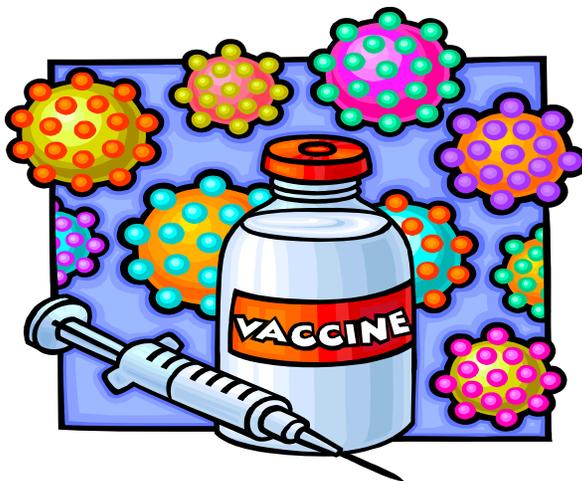
Bacteria may become resistant when antibiotics are misused. Resistant bacteria are no longer killed by antibiotics. If you use antibiotics right, you can help stop bacteria from becoming resistant.

**By taking simple steps, you can fight antibiotic-resistant bacteria.**



## How do people misuse antibiotics?

- 1) *By using antibiotics to treat viruses.*
- 2) *By not taking all of their antibiotics because they feel better.*



## You can help prevent resistant bacteria.



*A prescription for parents*

- 1) Learn the differences between bacterial and viral infections.
- 2) Talk to your child's doctor about them.
- 3) Understand that antibiotics should not be used for viral infections.

## When are antibiotics needed and when are they not?

Most often, the conditions listed below do not need antibiotics. Your doctor will decide if antibiotics are needed based on your symptoms and/or lab tests.

Sore throats: Viruses cause most sore throats. They don't need antibiotics. "Strep" throat is caused by bacteria. A lab test should be done to diagnose it before antibiotics are given.

Ear infections: Most ear infections do not need antibiotics. Some do. Again, your doctor will decide when antibiotics are appropriate.

Sinus infections: Most sinus infections—even those with thick, green mucus—do not need antibiotics.

Cough or bronchitis: Bronchitis rarely needs antibiotics.

Colds: Viruses cause the common cold. Antibiotics never work against them. Ask your doctor for ways to make you feel better as you fight the virus.

## The infection may change.

Viral illness may lead to bacterial illness. When sick, follow your doctor's orders. Viral illnesses may last several days. Call your doctor if the illness gets worse or it lasts a long time. He or she will talk with you about the symptoms and decide if antibiotics are now needed.