

Taking **ANTIBIOTICS** when you don't need them puts you and your family at risk



Taking antibiotics encourages harmful bacteria that live inside you to become resistant. That means that antibiotics may not work when you really need them. This puts you and your family at risk of a more severe or longer illness.

**Take your doctor, pharmacist or nurse's advice
when it comes to antibiotics.**

Keep  Working

www.nhsinform.scot/antibiotics



No one likes being sick and it's especially upsetting when your child is ill.

REMEMBER IF YOU'RE FEELING UNWELL ANTIBIOTICS AREN'T ALWAYS NEEDED

How to look after yourself and your family:

If you or a family member are feeling unwell, have a cold or flu and you haven't been prescribed antibiotics, here are some effective self-care ways to help you feel better:

- **Ask your pharmacist to recommend medicines to help with symptoms or pain.**
- Get plenty of rest.
- Make sure you or your child drink enough to avoid feeling thirsty.
- Fever is a sign the body is fighting the infection and usually gets better by itself in most cases. You can use paracetamol if you or your child are uncomfortable as a result of a fever.
- Make sure to use a tissue for your nose and wash your hands frequently to avoid spreading your infection to family and friends.

How long should my symptoms last for?

In most cases common illnesses and symptoms last approximately:

Common illnesses	Most people are better by
Earache (middle ear infection)	8 days
Sore throat	7–8 days
Sinusitis (adults only)	14–21 days
Cold	14 days
Cough or bronchitis	21 days

If you are very worried, not improving, or feel you are getting worse you should contact your GP, or at other times call NHS 24's 111 service.

These symptoms are possible signs of serious illness and should be assessed urgently:

1. If your skin is very cold or has a strange colour, or you develop an unusual rash.
2. If you feel confused or have slurred speech or are very drowsy.
3. If you have difficulty breathing. Signs can include:
 - breathing quickly
 - turning blue around the lips and the skin below the mouth
 - skin between or above the ribs getting sucked or pulled in with every breath.
4. If you develop a severe headache and are sick.
5. If you develop chest pain.
6. If you have difficulty swallowing or are drooling.
7. If you cough up blood.
8. If you are feeling a lot worse.

If you or your child has any of these symptoms, are getting worse, or are sicker than you would expect (even if your/their temperature falls), seek medical advice urgently by contacting your GP, or at other times calling NHS 24's 111 service. If you or they have any of symptoms 1-3, go to A&E immediately or call 999.

For more information visit www.nhsinform.scot/antibiotics

WHEN ANTIBIOTICS ARE NEEDED

Antibiotics are needed for serious bacterial infections including:

- Sepsis
- Pneumonia
- Urinary tract infections
- Sexually transmitted infections like gonorrhoea
- Meningococcal meningitis

If you're worried, speak to a doctor who will be able to advise you on the best treatment for your symptoms.

Remember never share antibiotics or keep for later use. For more information on antibiotics visit www.nhsinform.scot/antibiotics



Become an Antibiotic Guardian and protect yourself, your family and friends against the spread of antibiotic resistance.

Join us at antibioticguardian.com