

Bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics are harder to treat and some can't be treated at all. About 2.8 million people get sick and 35,000 people die each year in the US because of antibiotic-resistant infections.

**Do not pressure your doctor to prescribe an antibiotic unless they feel your infection is caused by bacteria.**

**If you are prescribed an antibiotic...**

- Take it exactly as your doctor tells you
- Do not skip doses
- Do not share it with others
- Do not save it for later
- Talk to your pharmacist about safely discarding leftover medicine



Here are some other things you can do to stay healthy so you may not need antibiotics:



Wash your hands often with plain soap and water and scrub for at least 20 seconds, especially after coughing or sneezing.



Immunize yourself and your family. Get your flu shot every year

For more information and materials please visit:

**mi-marr.org**

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Michigan Antibiotic Resistance Reduction Coalition

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# Antibiotics

## What you should know



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**Antibiotics are powerful medicines. They kill bacteria or stop them from growing.**

- Antibiotics only treat bacterial infections.
- Viral illnesses cannot be treated with antibiotics.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist for tips and over-the-counter medications to help relieve your symptoms.

## Antibiotics cannot fight infections caused by viruses like colds and flu.

What's got you sick?	Common Cause			Are antibiotics needed?
	Bacteria	Bacteria or Virus	Virus	
Strep throat	✓			Yes
Whooping cough	✓			Yes
Urinary tract infection	✓			Yes
Sinus infection		✓		Maybe
Middle ear infection		✓		Maybe
Bronchitis/chest cold (in otherwise healthy children and adults)*		✓		No
Common cold/runny nose			✓	No
Sore throat (except strep)			✓	No
Flu			✓	No

\* In some cases, acute bronchitis is caused by bacteria, but even in these cases antibiotics still do not help

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Do not** pressure your doctor to prescribe an antibiotic unless they feel your infection is caused by bacteria.
- Tell your doctor that you are concerned about antibiotic resistance and ask:
  - Can your doctor prescribe a “narrow spectrum” antibiotic for your infection?
  - Can your infection be treated with fewer doses?

**Antibiotics kill good bacteria in your body which can lead to side effects such as diarrhea or yeast infections.**

A “broad spectrum” antibiotic kills a wider range of bacteria than a “narrow spectrum” antibiotic.

Talk to your doctor about the risks and how to limit them.