

Antibiotics Are Not Always The Answer!



Here is what you need to know about antibiotics: Using antibiotics for colds, mild coughs, and even green snotty noses can actually be harmful to you or your child's health!

Why? Antibiotics are not designed to treat all infections. Antibiotics are powerful medicines that help cure certain infections like strep throat, some ear and sinus infections, and other infections caused by bacteria. But antibiotics will not cure – or even help – other illnesses such as chest colds, bronchitis and the flu. Let your doctor decide whether you need an antibiotic.

Taking antibiotics when they are not needed creates health risks. When you overuse antibiotics, some bacterial germs develop ways of fighting off the antibiotics. These kinds of germs are known as drug-resistant bacteria or 'superbugs.' If you or your child gets an infection from a superbug, it may be harder to cure and you could get even sicker!

If You Do Not Get An Antibiotic For Your Illness:

- Get extra sleep.
- Drink extra fluids.
- Try a non-prescription pain reliever.
- Try over-the-counter cold and cough medicine.

If You Do Get An Antibiotic For Your Illness:

- Take the medication EXACTLY as the doctor has instructed.
- ALWAYS take the full prescription.
- NEVER share prescription medicine with other family members or friends.

Don't Make Someone Else Sick! Here's How:

- Wash your hands a lot.
- Keep your hands away from your nose and mouth.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you sneeze or cough.

Please don't insist on antibiotics when your doctor says you don't need them!

"Antibiotics Are Not Always The Answer" is a public education campaign from the New Mexico Department of Health.