

Remember

- **Antibiotics won't work in the case of a cold or the flu**
- **Take antibiotics responsibly and only when they are prescribed by your doctor**
- **Keeping antibiotics effective is everybody's responsibility**

When you *do* need them, make sure you take antibiotics responsibly

When you receive a prescription for antibiotics, you must follow the doctor's instructions in order to minimise the risk of developing resistant bacteria.

If you do not follow the instructions correctly, for example if you shorten the length of time of treatment, if you take a lower dose or if you do not take the antibiotics at the correct time interval prescribed by your doctor, bacteria can become resistant to antibiotics.

Resistant bacteria can stay with you and can also be passed on to others. This may put you and others at risk of not responding to antibiotics next time you need them.

- **Follow your doctor's advice on when and how to take antibiotics**
- **Don't use "left-over" antibiotics**
- **Ask your doctor or your pharmacist about how to dispose of any remaining antibiotics**



Antibiotic Awareness

Keep Antibiotics Effective

Bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics are an increasingly serious health problem

For many decades, antibiotics have cured life-threatening infections. But in recent years, incorrect use of antibiotics has caused the development and spread of bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics.

When people get infections that are caused by resistant bacteria, antibiotics are no longer effective in treating the infection and the disease may take a longer time to go away or even become more serious.

Allowing antibiotic resistance to develop is a serious public health threat because resistant bacteria may spread in a community.

Take antibiotics only when necessary

Antibiotics should be used only when needed, because excessive use can make bacteria resistant to antibiotics.

Taking antibiotics when they are not necessary will not help you. For example, antibiotics are NOT effective against infections caused by viruses such as common colds or flu. In most cases, your immune system should be able to fight simple infections. Taking antibiotics will not help you recover or prevent the viruses from spreading to other persons.

Only a medical doctor can make the correct diagnosis and decide whether your condition needs antibiotic treatment.

- **Keeping antibiotics effective is everyone's responsibility**
- **Responsible use of antibiotics can help stop resistant bacteria**
- **Stopping resistant bacteria will keep antibiotics effective for the use of future generations**
- **Do not take antibiotics without a doctor's prescription**
- **If you have a cold or flu and your doctor decides that you do not need antibiotics, take care of yourself in order to get better**
- **If your symptoms do not get better or even become worse in the timeframe indicated by your doctor, call your doctor because you may need to be re-evaluated**

EUROPEAN
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AWARENESS DAY



A European Health Initiative



Cold? Flu? Take care not antibiotics!

What to do if you have a cold or flu and your doctor does not prescribe antibiotics

1. **Rest and take care of yourself** in order to get better
2. **Drink plenty of liquids** so you can avoid becoming dehydrated
3. **Ask your doctor about other non-antibiotic treatments** for relief of your symptoms like your stuffy nose, sore throat, cough, etc.

If your symptoms do not get better or even become worse in the time frame indicated by your doctor, call your doctor because you may need to be re-evaluated.