

What you need to know about antibiotics



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Common questions about what these drugs can and can't do.

What kinds of infections do antibiotics treat?

Antibiotics only work on infections caused by bacteria. If your health care provider determines you need antibiotics, take them exactly as they are prescribed.

Do antibiotics work for viruses?

No, they don't work on infections caused by viruses such as colds, the flu, and bronchitis.

Do antibiotics have side effects?

Yes, they can cause side effects like:

- Rash
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Yeast infections

What happens when antibiotics are overused?

- It can cause bacteria to change so that these drugs don't work to kill them.
- When bacteria become resistant, it gets harder to find antibiotics to treat the infection they're causing.
- Resistant bacteria can spread to other people.

Work with your health care provider to decide if antibiotics are right for you.



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