



Georgia United against Antibiotic Resistant Disease

Get Smart about Antibiotics:

- Antibiotics are strong medicines, but they don't cure everything.
- When not used correctly, antibiotics can actually be **harmful** to your child's health.
- Antibiotics can cure most bacterial infections – they cannot cure viral illnesses.
- Antibiotics kill bacteria – not viruses.
- When your child is sick, antibiotics are not always the answer.

Use Antibiotics Wisely

Talk with your doctor or health care provider about the right medicines for your health.

about GUARD

The GUARD Coalition seeks to reduce the spread of antibiotic-resistant disease and save antibiotic strength by decreasing inappropriate antibiotic use throughout the state of Georgia through the collaborative efforts of professional, academic, community, government, labor and industry partners.

for more information:

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ANTIBIOTICS

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

information for parents



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Get smart. Read the chart.

Problem	Virus?	Bacteria?	Antibiotic Needed?
Chest cold (bronchitis)	X		No
Cold	X		No
"Flu"	X		No
Green/Yellow Runny Nose	X		No
Middle Ear Infection	X	X	Sometimes
Sinus Infection	X	X	Sometimes
Strep Throat		X	Yes
Non-Strep Sore Throat	X		No

PROTECT YOUR CHILD GIVE THE BEST CARE

Antibiotics should not be used to treat the common cold, runny noses, or most coughs. Children fight off these viral illnesses on their own.

If your child's doctor or health care provider prescribes an antibiotic to treat a bacterial infection — like strep throat — be sure to give your child all of the medicine. Only using part of the prescription means that only part of the infection has been treated. Not finishing the medicine can cause resistant bacteria to develop.

Talk to your doctor or nurse to learn more.

THE RISK: BACTERIA BECOME RESISTANT

What's the harm in giving your child antibiotics anytime? Using antibiotics when they are not needed can cause some bacteria to become resistant to the antibiotic.

These resistant bacteria are stronger and harder to kill. They can stay in your child's body and can cause severe illnesses that can't be cured with antibiotic medicines. A cure for resistant bacteria may require stronger treatment — and possibly a stay in the hospital.

To help prevent antibiotic resistance, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends giving you child antibiotics **only when necessary**.

ANTIBIOTICS AREN'T ALWAYS THE ANSWER

Antibiotics are powerful medicines that kill bacteria, but not viruses. Most illnesses are caused by one of these two types of germs. Antibiotics can't fight viral infections, like colds and flu. See the chart above for symptom-specific information.

Bacteria cause strep throat, some pneumonia, and sinus infections. *Antibiotics can work.*

Viruses cause the common cold, most coughs, and the flu. *Antibiotics don't work.*

Using antibiotics for a virus:

- Will **NOT** cure the infection
- Will **NOT** help your child feel better
- Will **NOT** keep others from catching your child's illness

When your child is sick, you want to do everything you can to help. But antibiotics are not the answer for every illness. This brochure will help you know when antibiotics work — and when they won't. For more information, talk to your doctor or visit www.GUARD-GA.org

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I know if my child has a virus or a bacterial infection?

Ask your child's doctor or health care provider and follow his or her advice on what to do about your child's illness.

Does this mean I should never give my child antibiotics?

Antibiotics are very strong medicines and should be used to treat bacterial infections. Your doctor or health care provider will prescribe antibiotics if your child has a bacterial infection.

What if mucus from the nose changes color from clear to yellow or green? Does this mean that my child needs an antibiotic?

Yellow or green mucus does not mean that your child has a sinus infection. It is normal for the mucus to get thick and change color during a viral cold.