Why is it important to Be Antibiotics Aware?

Antibiotics save lives. When a patient needs antibiotics, the benefits outweigh the risks of side effects or antibiotic resistance.

When antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help you, and the side effects could still hurt you.

Reactions from antibiotics cause 1 out of 5 medication–related visits to the emergency department.

Each year in the United States, at least 2 million people get infected with antibiotic-resistant bacteria. At least 23,000 people die as a result.

How can I stay healthy?

You can stay healthy and keep others healthy by:

- Cleaning hands
- Covering coughs
- Staying home when sick
- Getting recommended vaccines, for the flu, for example

Talk to your doctor or nurse about steps you can take to prevent infections.

Remember!

Antibiotics will not treat most acute respiratory tract infections. Using antibiotics when not needed could do more harm than good.

Ask your healthcare professional or pharmacist about over–the–counter medicines that can help you feel better

ASAP

Nebraska Medicine

NEBRASKA
Good Life. Great Mission.
DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

CDC

You have been diagnosed with an Acute Respiratory Tract Infection

BE ANTIBIOTICS AWARE
SMART USE, BEST CARE

Viral Upper Respiratory Infections (URI)

The most common URIs are "colds". The common cold is caused by a virus. Symptoms can last up to 2 weeks.

Symptoms may include:

- Soreness in the chest
- Fatigue (feeling tired)
- Mild headache
- Mild body aches
- Watery eyes
- Sore throat

Viruses or Bacteria
What's got you sick?

CDC

BE ANTIBIOTICS AWARE
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Common Condition	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

* Studies show that in otherwise healthy children and adults, antibiotics for bronchitis won't help you feel better.

Acute Bronchitis

Bronchitis occurs when the airways of the lungs swell and produce mucus. **The main symptom is cough.** It is usually caused by a virus, after an upper respiratory infection.

Bacteria can sometimes cause acute bronchitis, but even in these cases antibiotics are NOT recommended and will not help you get better.

Your doctor will ask you questions and examine you to rule out bacterial pneumonia.

Acute Sinusitis

Sinusitis occurs when fluid is trapped or in the sinuses. **The main symptoms are headache and facial pressure.** It is usually caused by a virus.

Even when sinusitis may be caused by bacteria, antibiotics are only recommended for SEVERE symptoms, and may not be guaranteed to help your symptoms.

Contact your doctor if you have:

- fever, severe facial pain or nasal discharge
- no improvement in symptoms after 10 days
- worsened symptoms after initial improvement

Recommended Treatment

Most Acute Respiratory Infections get better on their own—without antibiotics.

To Feel Better:

- **Get plenty of rest & fluids**
- **Use a clean humidifier or cool mist vaporizer**
- **Saline nasal rinses and warm compresses**
- **Use lozenges for cough (not for children <4yrs old)**

Cough is the most common symptom for which adult patients visit their primary care provider.

Your doctor cannot tell the difference between a viral or bacterial infection based on the color of your mucus.