What Everyone Should Know and Do
Snort. Sniffle. Sneeze. No Antibiotics Please!

Are you aware that colds, flu, most sore throats, and bronchitis are caused by viruses? Did you know that antibiotics do not help fight viruses? It's true. Plus, taking antibiotics when you have a virus may do more harm than good. Taking antibiotics when they are not needed increases your risk of getting an infection later that resists antibiotic treatment.

Antibiotics cure bacterial infections, not viral infections such as:

- Colds or flu;
- Most coughs and bronchitis;
- Sore throats not caused by strep; or
- Runny noses.

Taking antibiotics for viral infections, such as a cold, cough, the flu, or most bronchitis, will not:

- Cure the infections;
- Keep other individuals from catching the illness; or
- Help you feel better.

What Can You Do To Protect Yourself Or Your Child?

When you use antibiotics appropriately, you do the best for your health, your family's health, and the health of those around you. "We want Americans to keep their families and communities healthy by getting smart about the proper use of antibiotics," said Lauri Hicks, D.O., medical director of CDC's Get Smart campaign.

What To Do

Talk with your healthcare provider about antibiotic resistance.

When you are prescribed an antibiotic,

- Take it exactly as the doctor tells you. Complete the prescribed course even if you are feeling better. If treatment stops too soon, some bacteria may survive and re-infect you.

  This goes for children, too. Make sure your children take all medication as prescribed, even if they feel better.

  Throw away any leftover medication once you have completed your prescription

What Not To Do

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- Colds or flu;
- Most coughs and bronchitis;
- Sore throats not caused by strep; or
- Runny noses.