

Antibiotic information leaflet



Patient's name

No antibiotic prescription given

Antibiotic prescription given today

but it should only be collected after

days if needed from: surgery reception

GP

pharmacy

Why did you not get antibiotics today?

- Colds and most coughs, sinusitis, otitis media (earache) and sore throats often get better without antibiotics.
- The table below shows you how long these illnesses normally last, what you can do to ease your symptoms and when you should go back to your GP or contact NHS 111 (England), NHS Direct (Wales) or NHS 24 (Scotland).

Please tick	Illness	Lasts on average	What you can do to ease the symptoms	When should you (or your child) go back to your GP practice or contact NHS 111, NHS 24, or NHS Direct Wales? (Listed in order of urgency, with the most urgent symptoms first.)
	Ear infection	4 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have plenty of rest. • Drink enough fluids to avoid feeling thirsty. • Ask your local pharmacist to recommend medicines to bring down your temperature or control pain (or both). • Other things you can do suggested by GP or nurse. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you develop a severe headache and are sick. 2. If your skin is very cold or has a strange colour, or you develop an unusual rash. 3. If you feel confused or have slurred speech or are very drowsy. 4. If you have difficulty breathing. Signs that suggest breathing problems can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ breathing quickly ○ turning blue around the lips and the skin below the mouth ○ skin between or above the ribs getting sucked or pulled in with every breath. 5. If you develop chest pain. 6. If you have difficulty swallowing or are drooling. 7. If you cough up blood. 8. If hearing problems develop or if there is fluid coming out of your ears (any earache in children). 9. If you are feeling a lot worse or are not improving by the time given in the 'Lasts on average' column. 10. Other
	Sore throat	1 week		
	Common cold	1 ½ weeks		
	Sinusitis	2 ½ weeks		
	Cough or bronchitis	3 weeks		
	Other infection

Why you should only take antibiotics when they are needed

- Bacteria can adapt and find ways to survive the effects of an antibiotic. They become 'antibiotic resistant' so that the antibiotic no longer works.
- The more we use antibiotics, the greater the chance that bacteria will become resistant to them so that they no longer work. If we all try to reduce their usage, antibiotics will be more likely to work when we **really** need them.
- Antibiotic-resistant bacteria don't just infect you, **they can spread to other people in close contact with you.**
- Some antibiotics can cause allergic reactions such as rashes, being sick if you also drink alcohol and reactions to sunlight – as well as other symptoms.