

Talk to Your Local Pharmacist About Antibiotics!

Pharmacists are medication experts and are trained to help you get the most benefit out of your medicines with the least amount of harm. Antibiotics are commonly prescribed, but few people know they can also make you sick if not used correctly! Protect your health and talk to your pharmacist today!

Why should I take antibiotics as prescribed by my medical provider?

Antibiotics help your body fight bacteria that cause infections!



Your medical provider chose an antibiotic that will help clear your infection

- There are many kinds of antibiotics that can be used for different types of bacteria.
- The number of days you have to take an antibiotic depends on many things, such as, the type and severity of the infection, and the particular antibiotic chosen for you.

You should take your antibiotics as directed, even if you start feeling better.

- If you stop your antibiotics too early, your infection might come back.
- Stopping antibiotics too early could also cause the antibiotic to not work as well the next time you need it. As a result, other antibiotics that have more side effects or may not fight the infection as well may need to be used in the future.

Pharmacists can work with your medical provider to choose the right antibiotic, dose, and duration for you!

What is the best way to take my antibiotics?

Each antibiotic has a specific way it should be taken to fight the infection. It is important to know how to take it to have the best chance of killing the bacteria, while also lowering the risk of side effects (e.g., reactions).

Pharmacists can answer your questions about antibiotics!

Common questions about antibiotics include:

- Should I take it with or without food?
- Does this affect my other medications?
- What time should I take my antibiotic?
- What side effects can I expect?



What if I can't afford antibiotics?

If cost is keeping you from getting antibiotics that you need, your pharmacist can help you find cheaper options or connect you with a free medical clinic, drug company, or drug donation site.



Do antibiotics help when I have an infection caused by a virus?

“Antibiotics” kill bacteria, “antivirals” kill viruses!



Antibiotics kill bacteria, but do not work for viruses such as the “common cold,” flu, or COVID-19. However, certain people may qualify for antiviral medications.

Pharmacists can work with your medical providers to determine whether or not you need antibiotics or antivirals.

Taking antibiotics for a viral infection does not make the infection go away faster and can cause more harm than good.

Pharmacists can help you pick over the counter medications to manage symptoms from a viral infection.

What are the risks of taking antibiotics?

Even when antibiotics are used correctly, there are risks of side effects and antibiotic resistance (infections become harder to treat). Only use antibiotics when necessary.

All medications have a risk of harmful side effects. With antibiotics, it is common to experience stomach upset or diarrhea.

Antibiotics may cause a severe form of diarrhea, called *Clostridioides difficile* or *C. diff* infection, which can lead to long-term effects on your colon.

Antibiotic resistance can be a negative consequence of taking antibiotics, especially when taken incorrectly. Resistance is something that happens over time and decreases an antibiotic’s ability to fight an infection.

Pharmacists can work with your medical team to lower these risks!



If you have questions or concerns about antibiotics, ask your pharmacist.

Learn More



Scan to learn more about talking to your pharmacist & the pharmacist’s role in preventing antibiotic resistance!



Scan to check out the SIDP Public Education site!