



# The good and bad of antibiotics

## What are antibiotics?

Antibiotics are used to stop the growth of or to destroy bacteria of infectious diseases.

## Why do I need a lab test?

Many lab tests can tell the clinicians if you have a bacteria or virus causing your illness, so if the clinician recommends a lab test, consider doing it.

**If you have a virus, antibiotics will not cure an infection, help you feel better or keep others from catching an illness.**

### Viral infections include:

- Cold
- Flu
- Most coughs
- Most bronchitis
- Runny nose

### Taking antibiotics for viral infections will NOT:

- Cure the infection
- Help you feel better
- Keep other individuals from catching the illness

## The good of antibiotics

- Kills bacteria that are causing your discomfort or illness

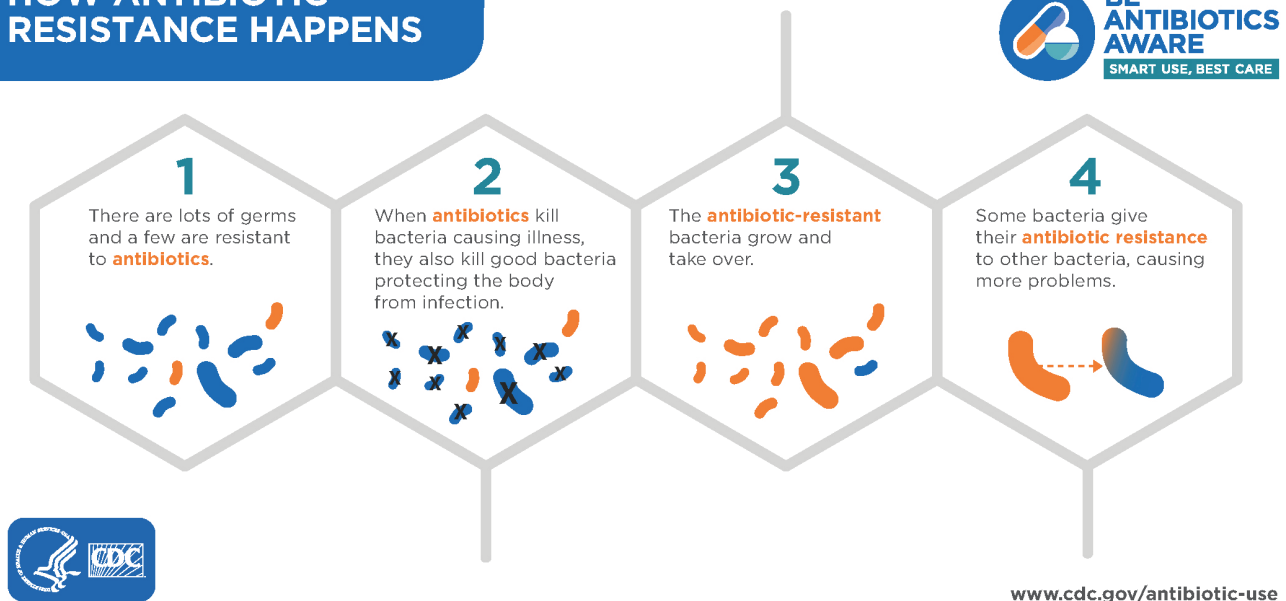
**If you've been prescribed antibiotics, take them as directed and for the length of time directed by the doctor.**

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## The bad of antibiotics

- They kill the healthy bacteria in your gut, allowing more harmful bacteria to grow in its place
- All drugs have side effects; make sure to ask your pharmacist about what to expect and common adverse effects
- If not taken as prescribed or not taking the prescription because you feel better, can contribute to antibiotic resistance. Antibiotic resistance does not mean the body is becoming resistant to antibiotics; it is that bacteria have become resistant to the antibiotics designed to kill them.
  - Antibiotic resistance occurs when bacteria are not killed, but the growth just slows down. Once bacteria start to grow again, you may have more symptoms and the same antibiotics may not work again!
  - Bacteria will inevitably find ways of resisting the antibiotics developed

### HOW ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE HAPPENS



#### References:

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