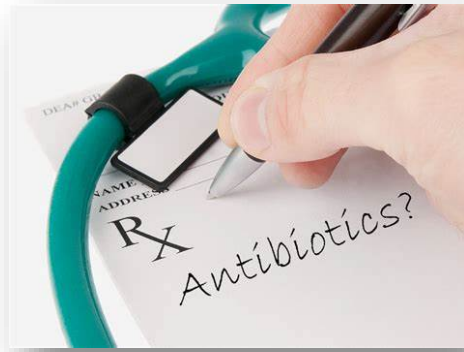


Antibiotics

If your child has a sore throat, cough, or runny nose, you might expect the doctor to prescribe antibiotics. But most of the time, children don't need antibiotics to treat a respiratory illness. In



fact, antibiotics can do more harm than good. Here's why: **Antibiotics fight bacteria, not viruses.** If your child has a bacterial infection, antibiotics may help. But if your child has a virus, antibiotics will not help your child feel better or keep others from getting sick. Antibiotics kill bacteria and cure infections caused by bacteria, such as strep throat. Viruses are completely unaffected by antibiotics. Remember, we have nursing staff available to answer questions as well as daily sick check appointments with providers.

Colds and flu are caused by viruses.

Chest colds, such as bronchitis, are also caused by viruses. Bronchitis is a cough with a lot of thick, sticky phlegm or mucus. Cigarette smoke and particles in the air can also cause bronchitis. But bacteria are rarely the cause.

Most upper respiratory tract infections are also caused by viruses. The symptoms are a lot of mucus in the nose and post-nasal drip. Mucus that is colored does not necessarily mean your child has a bacterial infection.

Your Child May Need Antibiotics if:

- A bacterial form of pneumonia or whooping cough is diagnosed by your child's doctor.
- Symptoms of a sinus infection do not get better in 10 to 14 days, or they get better and then worse again.
- Your child has a yellow-green nasal discharge and a fever of at least 102° F for several days in a row without any improvement in their symptoms.
- Your child has strep throat, after using strict criteria to determine if testing is indicated and based on a positive rapid strep test or throat culture. Antibiotics should not be prescribed unless one of these tests shows the strep throat bacteria. Strep cannot be diagnosed just by looking at the throat.