90% of cold and flu symptoms are due to a virus, not bacteria.

Antibiotics are not effective for treating viruses.

1 Sinus Infections
- Most get better in 2 weeks without antibiotics
- You may need antibiotics if you have face pain or pus for 3-4 days, PLUS a high fever (39°C)
- Mucus colour is not useful for knowing if you need antibiotics

2 Sore Throats
- Most get better in 2 weeks without antibiotics
- Likely viral if you also have a cough, runny nose, watery eyes, or diarrhea
- Throat swabs may be used to test for strep throat (which is treated with antibiotics)

3 Coughs and Bronchitis
- Most get better in 3 weeks without antibiotics
- You may need antibiotics if pneumonia is suspected
- Pneumonia can only be diagnosed with a chest x-ray

Antibiotics have their own risks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common</th>
<th>Rare, but serious</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diarrhea</td>
<td>Liver damage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upset stomach</td>
<td>Kidney damage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vomiting</td>
<td>Antibiotic resistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headache</td>
<td>Bacterial diarrhea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rash</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mucus colour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Antibiotics are not effective for treating viruses.

Most get better in 3 weeks without antibiotics.
You may need antibiotics if pneumonia is suspected.
Pneumonia can only be diagnosed with a chest x-ray.

Antibiotics have their own risks.

Common
- Diarrhea
- Upset stomach
- Vomiting
- Headache
- Rash
- Antibiotic resistance

Rare, but serious
- Liver damage
- Kidney damage
- Bacterial diarrhea


Content by Kelly Grindrod, PharmD; Brett Barrett, BScPhm; Ai-Leng Foong, PharmD, BSc. Design by Adrian Poon, BA; Allysa Misola.

©2019 Pharmacy5in5.com