



This Household is an Antibiotic Safety Zone™

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When seeking medical advice, this is our guide to antibiotic safety:

We avoid antibiotics unless they are clearly needed because we know that antibiotics sometimes can do more harm than good.

We do not take antibiotics without the advice of a doctor. We don't keep antibiotics in the cupboard for next time.

We know that antibiotics don't help against diseases caused by viruses such as colds, bronchitis in children, and bronchitis in non-smoking adults with normal lungs.

When seeing the doctor for coughs, colds, and flu, we ask what tests need to be done and question if antibiotics really are required.

Viral Colds, Coughs, and Bronchitis:

- Colds among parents, children, infants, and toddlers are a fact of life!
- Infants and toddlers with cough & runny nose can safely stay in school and child-care as long as they are alert, playing actively, drinking well, and are not breathing rapidly or crying non-stop.
- Children with coughs & colds do not always need to be taken to the doctor. The main reason for seeing a doctor about coughs & colds is to check whether the child has something more serious that may need medical treatment.
- Antibiotics do not stop the spread of coughs & colds in families, in the work-place, and in child-care centres except for whooping cough (pertussis).
- **Motto:** Antibiotics should not be given for colds (not even bad ones), asthma, childhood bronchitis, or bronchitis in non-smoking adults with normal lungs.

Ear Infections (Otitis Media):

- Sometimes children with ear infections will not be prescribed antibiotics. It's perfectly acceptable, on the advice of a physician, to choose not to give antibiotics for an ear infection, and to wait 2 or 3 days to see if it will clear up on its own. **Motto:** Ear infections sometimes can be managed without antibiotic treatment.

Sore Throats:

- Most sore throats (tonsillitis and pharyngitis) are caused by viruses but some are caused by Strep. Antibiotics are only needed when sore throat is due to Strep.
- **Motto:** We will ask for a throat swab test and wait until it comes back positive for Strep before taking antibiotics.

Pneumonia:

- If the doctor thinks we might have pneumonia, we will ask for a chest X-ray to prove it, if at all possible. We don't want to be told we have pneumonia (a serious infection) when all we have is a bad cold or bronchitis.

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