



# This Child-care Centre is an Antibiotic Safety Zone™

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## When caring for children, this is our guide to antibiotic safety:

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

Antibiotics do not help in any way against diseases caused by viruses such as colds and childhood bronchitis.

### **Viral Colds, Coughs, and Bronchitis:**

- Colds among infants & toddlers are a fact of life, no matter whether or not they are in child-care
- Children with cough & runny nose can safely stay in 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 if there is a worry that the child has something more serious that may need medical treatment.
- Antibiotics do not stop the spread of coughs & colds among children in child-care except for whooping cough (pertussis).
- Antibiotics should not be given for colds (even bad ones), childhood bronchitis, or asthma.

### **Ear Infections (Otitis Media):**

- Sometimes children with ear infections may not be prescribed antibiotics. It's perfectly acceptable, on the advice of a physician, for a parent 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.

### **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. Antibiotics should normally not be prescribed for sore throat until after a throat swab test is done and comes back positive for Strep.

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\*Adapted from *Little Well Beings* Canadian Paediatric Society