



Antibiotics FAQ

Antibiotics do NOT cure viral infections such as:

- Colds
- Flu (influenza)
- Most sore throats
- Most coughs and bronchitis (chest colds)
- Many sinus infections
- Many ear infections

The most common reason for antibiotics in a nursing home are:

- Urinary tract infections (UTIs)
- Pneumonia
- Skin and soft tissue infections
- Gastrointestinal infections

A Doctor or Nurse Practitioner must assess a patient before deciding if antibiotics are right for them.

What is the Resident Centered Medication Safety (RCMS) Project?

This facility is participating in a CareChoice performance improvement project called 'Resident Centered Medication Safety (RCMS).' The RCMS project is designed to reduce the use of unnecessary medications for patients and residents in participating nursing facilities.

Keeping residents safe is our main goal. Upon admission, patients at this facility will receive an enhanced medication review conducted by a Pharmacist who specializes in geriatric medication. This review will identify unnecessary medications, high risk medications and medication errors. Once reviewed, the Pharmacist and Doctor will consult to determine the best medication regimen for the patient. The RCMS project also includes staff education related to appropriate antibiotic use.

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AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE ABOUT ANTIBIOTICS

*Overuse and misuse of antibiotics
can increase antibiotic resistance*



Why CDC is Becoming Concerned About the Overuse of Antibiotics



- Sometimes not all bacteria die with an antibiotic. The stronger bacteria grow and spread. This is called antibiotic resistance.
- If antibiotics are not prescribed correctly, antibiotic resistance can develop, making it extremely difficult to treat a resistant infection and leaving the person very sick.
- The elderly may have more side effects to medications, which can cause falls, diarrhea, rashes, and kidney damage.

Antibiotics and Urinary Tract Infections (UTI)

If a test shows bacteria, is a UTI present?

No. To diagnose a UTI, the patient must have BOTH bacteria in the urine and at least one other symptom.

Up to 50% of seniors in a long-term care home will have bacteria in their urine without an infection.

Does increased confusion mean my loved one has a UTI?

No. Sudden confusion or behavior changes don't always mean a urinary tract infection (UTI). Confusion is commonly caused by:

- Dehydration
- Depression
- Poor sleep
- Constipation
- Not eating enough

*For more information, visit the
Center For Disease Control & Prevention at:
CDC.gov*

Reducing the Use of Antibiotics

Antibiotics are important drugs. The benefits of penicillin and other antibiotics in treating bacterial infections are well known. However their overuse and misuse can lead to antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

Antibiotics can cause diarrhea from *C. difficile* bacterium that may last a long time and be difficult to treat.

70% of nursing home residents get antibiotics in one year's time.

Every year, around 2 million people develop antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections, and at least 23,000 people die each year as a direct result of these infections.

We Need Your Support

Doctors, hospitals, nursing homes, and family/guardians all play a role for ensuring the proper use of antibiotics.

If you have questions about whether your loved one should be on antibiotics:

- Talk with their provider
- Remember that not all symptoms need to be treated with antibiotics
- Never pressure your healthcare professional to prescribe an antibiotic