



Keeping antibiotics effective, with your help

When to use antibiotics

Antibiotics are for fighting serious infections caused by some bacteria. If your symptoms are caused by a virus, an antibiotic won't help.

Even when used correctly, antibiotics can have side effects such as skin rashes, diarrhoea, or thrush. Also, resistant bacteria may survive and later develop into an infection that will be hard, maybe even impossible, to treat.

The global threat of antibiotic resistant bacteria

Each time antibiotics are used, there is a chance that some bacteria will survive and be resistant to future treatment - which is why you should use them according to medical advice and only when it is absolutely necessary.

If we overuse antibiotics, they might not work when you really need them and leave you vulnerable to new infections for a while.

How can you help?

Listen to your health professional's advice if they say antibiotics won't work for you. When you are ill they will recommend the best possible treatments and explain why they will work for you. A recommendation may include prescribed antibiotics, but only if they are likely to be effective.

By following medical advice you can help keep antibiotics effective into the future.

Our children will thank you for that.



Canterbury

District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha



ANTIBIOTICS DON'T FIX EVERYTHING

Take advice from your health professional

Choosing Wisely is an international initiative that aims to avoid wasteful or unnecessary medical tests, treatments and procedures – this includes not prescribing antibiotics where they won't help.

Choosing Wisely asks people to consider four key questions about their care and discuss them with their health professional:

1. Do I really need to have this test, treatment or procedure?
2. What are the risks?
3. Are there simpler, safer options?
4. What happens if I do nothing?

Remember, many infections get better by themselves.

Our commitment to you

- Your health is very important to us – we promise to treat your illness in the best way possible
- We won't prescribe antibiotics when they are likely to do more harm than good

If you have any questions about the use of antibiotics, please ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

