

## What Do Antibiotics Do?

Antibiotics are powerful medicines that help cure certain infections like strep throat. They will not cure - or even help - other illnesses such as chest colds, bronchitis and the flu.

## When Do You Need Antibiotics?

Let your doctor decide. Some illnesses require antibiotics. Others - like colds and the flu - are not cured or even helped with antibiotics.

## What Happens If You Take Antibiotics When You Don't Need Them?

If you or your children take an antibiotic when it's not needed, it loses its ability to fight infections. This means the next time you or your children really need the antibiotic, it might not work.



## Questions?

If you have questions about antibiotics, call your doctor or contact the New Mexico Department of Health at:

**(505) 827-0006**

[www.health.state.nm.us](http://www.health.state.nm.us)

For additional information, contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at:

**1-888-246-2675**

[www.cdc.gov/getsmart](http://www.cdc.gov/getsmart)

*A message from the*  
**NEW MEXICO**  
DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH**  
*Building a Healthy New Mexico!*

## What You Need to Know About Antibiotics



## If You Do Not Get An Antibiotic:

- 1 Get extra sleep.
- 2 Drink extra fluids.
- 3 Try a non-prescription pain reliever.
- 4 Try over-the-counter cold and cough medicine.

## Antibiotics Do Not Work For:

- Green/Yellow Runny Nose
- Colds
- Bronchitis
- Flu

## Don't Make Someone Else Sick! Here's How:

- 1 Wash your hands a lot.
- 2 Keep your hands away from your nose and mouth.
- 3 Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you sneeze or cough.

## If You Do Get An Antibiotic:

- 1 Never share prescription medicine with other family members or friends.
- 2 Always take the full prescription.
- 3 Take the medication exactly as the doctor has instructed.

## Antibiotics Do Work For:

- Strep Throat
- Urinary Tract Infections
- Some Ear Infections
- Some Sinus Infections



### What If You're Not Sure If You Need An Antibiotic?

Ask your doctor!  
He or she knows when you or your children need antibiotics.  
Then trust your doctor's advice.



**Antibiotics Are Not Always The Answer!**