

# Have you received a prescription for an antibiotic?

**Here are a few guidelines to help you maximize treatment effectiveness.**

## **Follow Directions**

Follow your prescription's instructions to the letter: dosage, schedule, with or without food, storage, and treatment duration. If the persistence or the pain of the underlying condition makes it difficult for you to follow directions, do not hesitate to contact your pharmacist who will advise you as to how you can minimize discomforts.



## Administering Children's Antibiotics

- ▶ When you administer antibiotics to children, include them in the process. There are fun activity books, such as colouring books and calendars, designed to teach children about medicated treatments. Through them, your child will help remind you when the time for the next dosage has come.
- ▶ For accurate measure, always use a graduated spoon designed for drug administration. Kitchen spoons are not reliable for medication because they may contain between 3 and 10 ml. You can also use an oral syringe (without needle) to administer the medication directly inside the child's cheek.
- ▶ Some drugs are available in chewable pill forms. Do not hesitate to ask for them. If your child can swallow pills without having to chew them, you can obtain a standard pill form.
- ▶ Have your child drink a very cold liquid or bite into an iced pop just before or right after you administer the medication. A frozen mouth can conceal the taste of antibiotics or help get rid of the bad aftertaste quickly.
- ▶ If your child refuses to take his medication due to its bad taste, contact your pharmacist who may have an alternative for you. He will also log this information in your child's file so that the next time you are faced with the need for a medicated treatment, you will not be given the same medication.

## When Taking Antibiotics, Which Is Best: With or Without Food?

Depending on the antibiotic that was prescribed, your pharmacist may recommend that you avoid taking it with dairy products or vitamin supplements. Some antibiotics bond to minerals and do not get absorbed by the body if they are taken alongside these products. This principle also

applies to over-the-counter products like stomach pain relief, antacids, and laxatives. If your antibiotic medication is not absorbed properly, it will not be effective in treating your infection. Therefore, avoid taking antibiotics with other products without first discussing it with your pharmacist.

## Antibiotics and Contraception

If you are a woman taking oral contraceptives (the pill), you may be advised to use a second method of birth control during your treatment. Some antibiotics reduce the effectiveness of oral contraceptives. Be sure to inform your pharmacist of your contraceptive method.

## Continuing the Treatment Until the End

You will most likely feel better before the treatment is over. However, it is very important that you keep taking your antibiotics for the total duration of the treatment. This ensures that the infection has been completely purged. Otherwise, the infection could resurface, requiring stronger antibiotics, which in turn, could increase your resistance to antibiotics.

### **If You Accidentally Skip a Dose**

If you realize you skipped a dose and it is now time for your next scheduled dose, do not double it; continue on with your regular schedule. If you are hesitant, ask your pharmacist for advice. A medication schedule has been provided for you; try to follow it as closely as possible as it is suited to your needs and allows for the antibiotic to work at maximum effectiveness.

## Antibiotic Resistance

Bacterial resistance develops when bacteria is able to fight the effect of antibiotics. When antibiotics are administered, weak bacteria die. Those that survive evolve into a different form of bacteria. Labelled as resistant bacteria, they become harder to treat. Stronger antibiotics are then necessary to purge infections completely.

## 4 Tips To Reduce the Risk of Antibiotic Resistance

- ▶ Do not take antibiotics to treat viral infections. Follow your physician's recommendation to avoid the use of antibiotics when suffering from a viral infection.
- ▶ Follow dosage directions to the letter: schedule, storage, and treatment duration. By doing so, you will maximize the drug's effectiveness.
- ▶ Do not take someone else's antibiotics and do not give yours to another person.
- ▶ Do not keep antibiotics in the event of another infection.

**Do not forget that your antibiotic cannot work alone: make sure you rest and drink plenty of fluids!**



**Antibiotics are ineffective against viral infections like the common cold or the flu. They act on bacteria, not on viruses. When antibiotics are prescribed to treat a viral infection, they are considered useless and can even promote antibiotic resistance.**

Consult your pharmacist or physician to find the treatment that is right for you, in accordance to your needs and health condition, as well as contraindications and possible side effects.

For more health information, please visit  
[www.ida-pharmacy.ca](http://www.ida-pharmacy.ca)

The information contained in this pamphlet should not be used as a substitute for medical care. Always seek the advice of your doctor before starting any treatment.

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## Antibiotics



**Using  
Antibiotics  
Properly**