

# ANTIBIOTICS: THREE QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

## 1) Do I really need antibiotics?

Antibiotics fight bacterial infections, like strep throat, whooping cough and bladder infections. But they don't fight viruses – like common colds, flu, or most sore throats and sinus infections. Ask if you have a bacterial infection.

## 2) What are the risks?

Antibiotics can cause unwanted side effects such as diarrhea and vomiting. They can also lead to “antibiotic resistance”– if you use antibiotics when you don't need them, they may not work when you do need them in the future.

## 3) Are there simpler, safer options?

The best way to treat most colds, coughs or sore throats is with plenty of fluids and rest. Talk to your health care provider about the options.

**Talk about what you need, and what you don't.**

**To learn more, visit [www.choosingwiselycanada.org/antibiotics](http://www.choosingwiselycanada.org/antibiotics)**