

So, when should antibiotics be taken?

- Only when your doctor prescribes them
- Antibiotics work by killing or containing growth of bacteria – and is helpful when you suffer from a bacterial infection



Antibiotics can't help you recover faster. They do not fight viruses such as flu or COVID-19.



Check with your doctor on the treatment you need.

go.gov.sg/use-antibiotics-right

To fight viral infections, you need time, not antibiotics.



Antibiotics DO NOT speed up recovery of flu, as they DO NOT work on viruses.

Flu and common cold are infections caused by viruses, so antibiotics are ineffective against them.



Most flu symptoms resolve by themselves within:

3-7
DAYS

What you should do when you are down with flu:

Get plenty of rest



Stay hydrated



Prevent the spread of germs by practising good hygiene habits



Consult your doctor if you do not get better



What happens if antibiotics are taken unnecessarily?

Misuse of antibiotics can lead to antibiotic resistance. This reduces the effectiveness of antibiotics in treating infections.

Drug-resistant bugs



Bacteria in your body become resistant to antibiotics.

Increased medical costs



Complications caused by drug-resistant bugs can increase the length of hospital stay and the costs of medical care.

Increased health risks



Illnesses caused by drug-resistant bugs are harder or impossible to treat, and can lead to disability and death.

What can be done to prevent antibiotic resistance?

DOs:

- If prescribed, take antibiotics exactly as per your doctor's instructions
- Ensure you and your family receive timely vaccinations to prevent infections
- Adopt a healthy lifestyle and practice good hygiene



DON'Ts:

- Do not insist for antibiotics from your doctor
- Do not take antibiotics for a viral infection like flu or cold
- Do not save antibiotics for the next time you get sick. Discard all leftover antibiotics

