



**BE
ANTIBIOTICS
AWARE**

SMART USE, BEST CARE

STAKEHOLDER TOOLKIT

#BeAntibioticsAware

U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week
November 13-19, 2017

www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use





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U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week Events Calendar

<p>Monday, November 13</p> <p>8 AM EST Launch Day</p>	<p>Participate in Thunderclap to launch at 12 PM Eastern. Distribute tailored press release and share materials, including PSA.</p>
<p>Tuesday, November 14</p> <p>Ongoing Promotion</p>	<p>Continue social media promotion and sharing of materials.</p>
<p>Wednesday, November 15</p> <p>Ongoing Promotion</p>	<p>Continue social media promotion and sharing of materials.</p>
<p>Thursday, November 16</p> <p>1-3 PM EST Global Twitter Chat</p>	<p>Join the global #AntibioticResistance Twitter chat.</p>
<p>Friday, November 17</p> <p>Ongoing Promotion</p>	<p>Continue social media promotion and sharing of materials.</p>

9 Ways to Support *Be Antibiotics Aware*

1. **Download and distribute the [new educational materials](#)**, which include fact sheets, brochures, and infographics for consumers and healthcare professionals.
2. **Join the [Be Antibiotics Aware Thunderclap](#)** to share the same message at the same time.
3. **Participate in the global [#AntibioticResistance](#) Twitter chat on Thursday, November 16 at 1pm ET.**
4. **Add the *Be Antibiotics Aware* Twibbon and Facebook Frame to your social media profile picture.**
5. **Use social media messages and graphics** to spark conversation on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn.
6. **Use the official hashtags:** 1) Educational effort hashtag: **#BeAntibioticsAware** during entire educational effort 2) #USAAW hashtag: **#USAAW17** during observance week and 3) Twitter hashtag: **#AntibioticResistance** during the Twitter chat on Thursday, November 16 at 1pm ET.
7. **Post the *Be Antibiotics Aware* web badges** to your organization's website or blog.
8. **Customize the press release** and distribute to media to demonstrate your organization's support of *Be Antibiotics Aware*.
9. **Use the “drop-in” articles** in your e-blasts, newsletters, and other publications.

Dear Colleague:

On behalf of the CDC's Office of Antibiotic Stewardship, we are excited to announce the launch of the 10th Annual U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week and the new *Be Antibiotics Aware* educational effort.

Since 2003, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Get Smart About Antibiotics campaign – often referred to as “Get Smart” – has been at the forefront of efforts to educate healthcare providers, patients and the public about the importance of appropriate antibiotic use and combating the threat of antibiotic resistance.

In recent years, conversations about antibiotics have evolved and there is ever-growing interest in topics like antibiotic use and resistance.

Be Antibiotics Aware features targeted messaging and relevant materials to meet the increasing demand for resources and information about antibiotics.

In preparation for U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week, CDC is urging stakeholders like you to join our efforts to raise awareness about the importance of safe antibiotic prescribing and use. The new *Be Antibiotics Aware* initiative provides resources to help improve antibiotic prescribing among healthcare professionals, focusing on prescribing antibiotics only when needed, and at the right dose for the right duration and at the right time.

Be Antibiotics Aware features a number of resources to help healthcare professionals (in both outpatient and inpatient settings) educate patients and families about antibiotic use and risks for potential side effects. For more information visit: www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

We appreciate your continued work to promote appropriate antibiotic use and are thankful for your support in the coming weeks and always.

Best,

Rosa Herrera
Associate Director for Communications Science (Acting),
Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion

Lauri Hicks, DO
Director, Office of Antibiotic
Stewardship

Key Messages

- ❑ **How to use:** Messages can be used to supplement your organization's current communications strategies regarding improved antibiotic prescribing and use.

Messages for U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week

- U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week (formerly Get Smart Week) is an annual one-week observance that gives participating organizations an opportunity to raise awareness of the threat of antibiotic resistance.
- *Be Antibiotics Aware*, a new CDC educational effort, complements U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week by providing stakeholders with up-to-date information about the importance of antibiotic prescribing and use.

Messages for Consumers

Core Messages

- **Antibiotics save lives.** When a patient needs antibiotics, the benefits outweigh the risks of side effects or antibiotic resistance.
- **Antibiotics aren't always the answer.** Everyone can help improve antibiotic prescribing and use. Improving the way healthcare professionals prescribe antibiotics, and the way we take antibiotics, helps keep us healthy now, helps fight antibiotic resistance, and ensures that these life-saving antibiotics will be available for future generations.
- **Antibiotics do not work on viruses**, such as colds and flu, or runny noses, even if the mucus is thick, yellow or green.
- **Antibiotics are only needed for treating certain infections caused by bacteria.** Antibiotics also won't help for some common bacterial infections including most cases of bronchitis, many sinus infections, and some ear infections.
- **An antibiotic will not make you feel better if you have a virus.** Respiratory viruses usually go away in a week or two without treatment. Ask your healthcare professional about the best way to feel better while your body fights off the virus.
- **When antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help you, and the side effects could still hurt you.** Side effects range from minor to very severe health problems. When you need antibiotics for an infection, then the benefits of the drug outweigh the risk of side effects.
- **Taking antibiotics creates resistant bacteria.** Antibiotic resistance occurs when bacteria no longer respond to the drugs designed to kill them.
- **If you need antibiotics, take them exactly as prescribed.** Talk with your doctor if you have any questions about your antibiotics, or if you develop any side effects, especially diarrhea, since that could be a *C. difficile* (*c. diff*) infection, which needs to be treated. Shortening the duration of antibiotic therapy to the minimum effective duration is a key antibiotic stewardship strategy in all settings of health care. The goal is to maximize the benefit to the patient by curing the infection while at the same time minimizing the risks of side effects from antibiotics and antibiotic resistance.
- **Stay healthy and keep others healthy** by cleaning hands, covering coughs, staying home when sick, and getting recommended vaccines, for the flu, for example.

Supporting Messages

Antibiotic Resistance

- Antibiotic resistance is one of the most urgent threats to the public's health.
- Each year in the United States, at least 2 million people get infected with antibiotic-resistant bacteria. At least 23,000 people die as a result.¹
- Antibiotic resistance does not mean the body is becoming resistant to antibiotics; it is that bacteria develop the ability to defeat the antibiotics designed to kill them.
- When bacteria become resistant, antibiotics cannot fight them, and the bacteria multiply.
- Some resistant bacteria can be harder to treat and can spread to other people.

Messages for Healthcare Professionals

- ❑ **What follows is helpful information you can use to talk with your patients about antibiotics.**

Outpatient HCPs

1. Follow clinical guidelines when prescribing antibiotics.
2. Remember to prescribe the right antibiotic, at the right dose, for the right duration, and at the right time.
3. Protect your patients. Only prescribe antibiotics when they are needed. You can do harm by prescribing antibiotics that aren't needed.
4. Tell your patients why they don't need antibiotics for a viral infection, what to do to feel better, and when to seek care again if they don't feel better.
5. Talk to your patients and their families about possible harms from antibiotics, such as allergic reactions, *C. difficile*, and antibiotic-resistant infections.
6. Watch for signs of sepsis, which can be life threatening. If you suspect sepsis, start antibiotics immediately. Signs include confusion or disorientation, shortness of breath, high heart rate, fever, or shivering or feeling very cold, extreme pain or discomfort, clammy or sweaty skin.
7. Follow hand hygiene and other infection prevention measures with every patient.

Inpatient & Long-Term Care HCPs

1. Follow clinical guidelines when prescribing antibiotics.
2. Always remember to prescribe the right antibiotic, at the right dose, for the right duration, and at the right time.
3. Review antibiotic therapy 48 to 72 hours after it is started based on the patient's/ resident's clinical condition and microbiology culture results, and stop or change antibiotic orders as needed—a critical step in care.
4. Talk to patients / residents and families about when antibiotics are and are not needed, and discuss possible harms such as allergic reactions, *C. difficile* and antibiotic-resistant infections.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/index.html>

5. Be aware of antibiotic resistance patterns in your facility and community; use the data to inform prescribing decisions.
6. Follow hand hygiene and other infection prevention measures with every patient/resident.

Supporting Messages

- Antibiotics are only needed for treating certain infections caused by bacteria. Antibiotics also won't help for some common bacterial infections including most cases of bronchitis, many sinus infections, and some ear infections.
- Antibiotics do not work on viruses, such as colds and flu, or runny noses, even if the mucus is thick, yellow or green.
- Antibiotic resistance is one of the most urgent threats to the public's health. Each year in the United States, at least 2 million people get infected with antibiotic-resistant bacteria. At least 23,000 people die as a result.
- Antibiotic resistance occurs when bacteria develop the ability to defeat the antibiotics designed to kill them.
- Any time antibiotics are used, they can cause side effects and lead to antibiotic resistance.
- Improving the way healthcare professionals prescribe antibiotics, and the way we take antibiotics, helps keep us healthy now, helps fight antibiotic resistance, and ensures that these life-saving drugs will be available for future generations.

Press Release Template

- ❑ **How to use:** Customize this news release by filling in pertinent information in the brackets. Send it to media to demonstrate your organization's support of *Be Antibiotics Aware*.

[INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME] supports CDC's new *Be Antibiotics Aware* educational effort

[INSERT CITY], November **[INSERT DATE]**, 2017 – Kicking off U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week November 13-19 and World Antibiotic Awareness Week, **[NAME OF ORGANIZATION]** joins the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in encouraging patients, families and healthcare professionals to *Be Antibiotics Aware* by learning about safe antibiotic prescribing and use.

Each year in the United States, at least 2 million people get infected with antibiotic-resistant bacteria. At least 23,000 die as a result. Antibiotic resistance, one of the most urgent threats to the public's health, occurs when bacteria no longer respond to the drugs designed to kill them.

Be Antibiotics Aware provides educational resources to help healthcare professionals improve antibiotic prescribing. *Be Antibiotics Aware* educates the public on what illnesses antibiotics treat, how to take antibiotics appropriately, and that antibiotics can have minor to very severe side effects. The resources include fact sheets, a brochure, infographics, and social media, video and audio tools.

Antibiotics are critical tools for treating a number of common infections, such as pneumonia, and for life-threatening conditions including sepsis. Antibiotics are only needed for treating certain infections caused by bacteria. Antibiotics also won't help some common bacterial infections including most cases of bronchitis, many sinus infections, and some ear infections.

Any time antibiotics are used, they can cause side effects and lead to antibiotic resistance. When antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help, and the side effects could still hurt you. Common side effects range from things like rashes and yeast infections to severe health problems like *Clostridium difficile* infection (also called *C. difficile* or *C. diff*), which causes diarrhea that can lead to severe colon damage and death.

If you need antibiotics, take them exactly as prescribed. Patients and families can talk to their healthcare professional if they have any questions about their antibiotics, or if they develop side effects, especially diarrhea, since that could be *C. difficile*, which needs to be treated.

Antibiotics do not work on viruses, such as colds and flu, or runny noses, even if the mucus is thick, yellow or green. Respiratory viruses usually go away in a week or two without treatment. Patients and families can ask their healthcare professional about the best way to feel better while their body fights off the virus.

We can all stay healthy and keep others healthy by cleaning our hands, covering our coughs, staying home when sick, and getting recommended vaccines, for the flu, for example.

Antibiotics save lives. When a patient needs antibiotics, the benefits outweigh the risks of side effects and antibiotic resistance. Improving the way we take antibiotics helps keep us healthy now, helps fight antibiotic resistance, and ensures that life-saving antibiotics will be available for future generations.

To learn more about *Be Antibiotics Aware* resources and antibiotic prescribing and use, visit www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

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Newsletter Content

- ❑ **How to use:** Insert the following pre-approved content into your newsletters, blogs, and other publications.

Article targeting Patients / Families

CDC warns patients and their families to *Be Antibiotics Aware*

CDC is advising patients and their families to use antibiotics only when necessary to further reduce antibiotic resistance and the spread of superbugs. To kick off *U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week*, CDC launched *Be Antibiotics Aware*, an educational effort to raise awareness about the importance of safe antibiotic prescribing and use.

The new *Be Antibiotics Aware* initiative educates the public about when antibiotics are needed, when they are not, how to take antibiotics appropriately and potential side effects.

CDC encourages patients and families to:

- Get the facts about antibiotics. Antibiotics do not work on viruses, such as colds and flu, or runny noses, even if the mucus is thick, yellow or green. When antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help you, and the side effects could still hurt you.
- Ask your doctor or nurse about the best way to feel better while your body fights off a virus (pain relievers, fever reducers, saline nasal spray or drops, warm compresses, liquids, and rest may help).
- If you need antibiotics, take them exactly as prescribed. Talk with your doctor if you have any questions about your antibiotics, or if you develop any side effects, especially diarrhea, since that could be a *C. difficile* (*c. diff*) infection, which needs to be treated. Shortening the duration of antibiotic therapy to the minimum effective duration is a key antibiotic stewardship strategy in all settings of health care. The goal is to maximize the benefit to the patient by curing the infection while at the same time minimizing the risks of side effects from antibiotics and antibiotic resistance.
- Stay healthy and keep others healthy by cleaning hands, covering coughs, staying home when sick, and getting recommended vaccines, for the flu, for example.

Patients and families are encouraged to use the educational materials and learn more about *Be Antibiotics Aware* by visiting: www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

Article targeting Healthcare Professionals

***Be Antibiotics Aware*: Protect your patients**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is urging healthcare professionals to prescribe antibiotics only when necessary to help fight antibiotic resistance and the spread of superbugs. To kick off *U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week*, CDC launched *Be Antibiotics Aware*, an educational effort to raise awareness about the importance of safe antibiotic prescribing and use.

The new *Be Antibiotics Aware* initiative provides resources to help improve antibiotic prescribing among healthcare professionals, focusing on prescribing antibiotics only when needed, and at the right dose for the right duration and at the right time.

CDC's *Be Antibiotics Aware* educational effort encourages healthcare professionals to:

1. Follow clinical guidelines when prescribing antibiotics.
2. Remember to prescribe the right antibiotic, at the right dose, for the right duration, and at the right time.
3. Protect your patients. Only prescribe antibiotics when they are needed. You can do harm by prescribing antibiotics that aren't needed.
4. Tell your patients why they don't need antibiotics for a viral infection, what to do to feel better, and when to seek care again if they don't feel better.
5. Talk to your patients and their families about possible harms from antibiotics, such as allergic reactions, *C. difficile*, and antibiotic-resistant infections.
6. Watch for signs of sepsis, which can be life threatening. If you suspect sepsis, start antibiotics immediately. Signs include confusion or disorientation, shortness of breath, high heart rate, fever, or shivering or feeling very cold, extreme pain or discomfort, clammy or sweaty skin.
7. Follow hand hygiene and other infection prevention measures with every patient.

Be Antibiotics Aware has resources to help healthcare professionals (in outpatient and inpatient settings) educate patients and families about antibiotic use and risks for potential side effects. For more information visit: www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

Digital Materials

- **How to use:** Post and share these graphics on your social media channels, blogs, and websites.

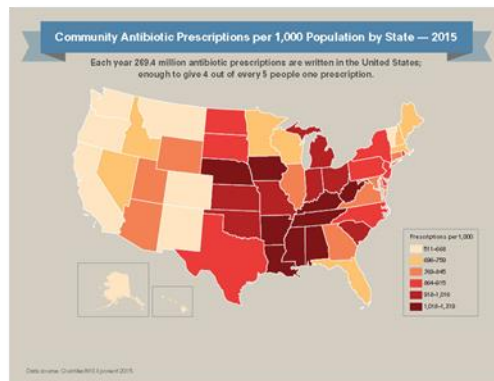
Logos



Web Badges



Other Graphics



[Community Antibiotic Prescriptions by State Map](#)

Social Media Posts

How to use:

- ❑ Copy and paste these social media messages. Use #BeAntibioticsAware in any messages you share.
- ❑ Repost CDC social media messages about *Be Antibiotics Aware*. Visit [@CDCgov](#), [@CDC_NCEZID](#), and CDC's [Facebook page](#).

Facebook/LinkedIn/Instagram Sample Posts

1. #BeAntibioticsAware helps #patients, caregivers, families, and #healthcare professionals improve antibiotic prescribing and use. Learn more. <https://go.usa.gov/xn4GP>
2. Do you or your loved one really need #antibiotics for colds, #flu, runny noses? Visit @CDCgov's website to find out. <https://go.usa.gov/xn4GP> #BeAntibioticsAware
3. Being #antibiotics aware = knowing that antibiotics aren't needed for most cases of #bronchitis, many #sinus infections, and some ear #infections. <https://go.usa.gov/xn4GP> #BeAntibioticsAware
4. Have a #virus (cold, #flu)? You can feel better without #antibiotics. Ask your #healthcare professional about the best way to feel better while your body fights off the virus. <https://go.usa.gov/xn4GP> #BeAntibioticsAware
5. When it comes to health, we all want to use the right tool for the job. Share this message and talk to your doctor or nurse about being #antibiotics aware. <http://bit.ly/2Aug6Tm> #BeAntibioticsAware
6. During U.S. #AntibioticAwareness Week, #BeAntibioticsAware and learn when antibiotics are needed and when they're not. <https://go.usa.gov/xn4GP>
7. When #antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help you, and the side effects could still hurt you. To learn more about antibiotic use, visit <https://go.usa.gov/xn4GP>. #BeAntibioticsAware
8. Providers: Give your #patients the BEST care by following #clinical guidelines when prescribing #antibiotics. <https://go.usa.gov/xn4GE> BeAntibioticsAware
9. We're proud to be a #BeAntibioticsAware partner for U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week! Learn how you can participate: <https://go.usa.gov/xn4Gm>.
10. We are antibiotics aware! During U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week, check out what our organization is doing to improve antibiotic prescribing and use: <https://go.usa.gov/xn4Gy>. #USA AW17 #BeAntibioticsAware
11. Patients! Don't ask for #antibiotics for viruses, like cold and flu. Instead, get CDC info on symptom relief: <https://go.usa.gov/xn4GV>. #BeAntibioticsAware. #USA AW17
12. Are you and your family antibiotics aware? Find out this U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week (formerly "Get Smart About Antibiotics Week")! <https://go.usa.gov/xn4GP> #USA AW17
13. Taking #antibiotics only when needed is one thing you can do to help fight antibiotic resistance. <https://go.usa.gov/xn4GP> #USA AW17



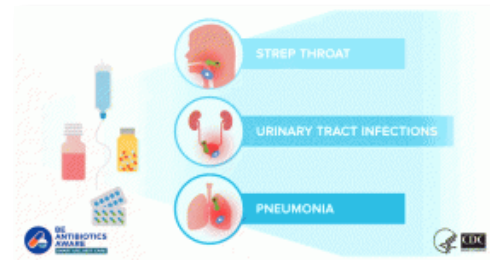
Twitter Sample Posts

1. #BeAntibioticsAware helps patients, families & #healthcare professionals improve antibiotic prescribing and use. <https://go.usa.gov/xn4Gp>
2. Everyone can help improve #antibiotic prescribing and use. Visit @CDCgov's website to #BeAntibioticsAware. <https://go.usa.gov/xn4Gp>
3. This #USA AW17, learn how you can #BeAntibioticsAware to protect yourself & your family. <https://go.usa.gov/xn4Gp>
4. #Antibiotics don't treat colds and #flu, or runny noses. <https://go.usa.gov/xn4Gp> #BeAntibioticsAware
5. Have a cold, #flu, or runny nose? You can feel better without an antibiotic. Learn more: <https://go.usa.gov/xn4Gp>. #BeAntibioticsAware
6. Pls RT! The best health care starts with using "The Right Tool" for the job. <http://bit.ly/2Aug6Tm> #BeAntibioticsAware
7. When #antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help you, & the side effects could still hurt you. <https://go.usa.gov/xn4Gp> #BeAntibioticsAware
8. HCPs: #BeAntibioticsAware by telling #patients why they don't need antibiotics for a #virus. <https://go.usa.gov/xn4Gd>
9. We're proud to #BeAntibioticsAware during #USA AW17. Learn how you can participate: <https://go.usa.gov/xn4Gw>. #SaveABX
10. Patients: Learn what you can do at home and at the clinic to #BeAntibioticsAware. <https://go.usa.gov/xn4Gp> #USA AW17
11. Parents/caregivers: Have a sick child? Antibiotics aren't always be the right tool. #BeAntibioticsAware: <http://bit.ly/2Aug6Tm> #USA AW17
12. Without #antibiotics, treating people with #sepsis, cancer & undergoing surgery becomes much harder. <https://go.usa.gov/xn4Gp> #USA AW17
13. Any time #antibiotics are used, they can cause side effects & lead to #AntibioticResistance. #BeAntibioticsAware! <https://go.usa.gov/xn4Gp>
14. #USA AW17 offers many ways to encourage antibiotic prescribing & use. <https://go.usa.gov/xn4Gp> #BeAntibioticsAware

Social Media Graphics



GIFs



Twitter Chat

- ❑ **How to participate:** Join CDC and fellow antibiotic use stakeholders for the global #AntibioticResistance Twitter chat on Thursday, November 16 from 1-3 pm EST. Use the following posts to promote the event to your network. Remember to use #AntibioticResistance in every post!

Save the Date



#AntibioticResistance Twitter chat on November 16 from 1-3 pm EST

Twibbon and Thunderclap Campaign

Twibbon

CDC will launch a [Be Antibiotics Aware Twibbon campaign](#) on Monday, November 13, to make it easy for social media users to demonstrate their support. Twibbon is a microsite that will allow anyone to add a *Be Antibiotics Aware* frame to their Twitter and Facebook profile and cover images.

Facebook Profile Frame

Let your Facebook followers know that you support *Be Antibiotics Aware* by adding a frame to your profile picture and Facebook stories. Access the Facebook frame here:

<https://twibbon.com/support/be-antibiotics-aware>.

Thunderclap

CDC will also launch a [Be Antibiotics Aware Thunderclap](#) campaign on Monday, November 13 at 12 PM ET. Thunderclap helps amplify social media messages by rallying partners and friends to share the same message at the same time through Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr, so that it cannot be ignored. Think of it as an "online flash mob."

The message goes out on November 13 at 12 PM ET! Show your support for appropriate antibiotic prescribing and use by joining the Thunderclap.



“The Right Tool” Public Service Announcements

- ❑ **How to use:** Share these “The Right Tool” Public Service Announcements (PSAs) to spread the word about *Be Antibiotics Aware* by using antibiotics only when needed. Make sure antibiotics are the right tool for the job! The PSAs are free to use in any communications channel.



[The Right Tool :30 TV PSA](#)

[The Right Tool :15 TV PSA](#)



[The Right Tool Print PSA](#)



Educational Materials

Print materials and video.

For Consumers

Antibiotics Aren't Always the Answer Brochure

Why does taking antibiotics lead to antibiotic resistance?

Any time antibiotics are used, they can cause side effects and lead to antibiotic resistance. Antibiotic resistance is one of the most urgent threats to the public's health. Always remember:

1. Antibiotic resistance does not mean the body is becoming resistant to antibiotics. It is that bacteria have become resistant to the antibiotics designed to kill them.
2. When bacteria become resistant, antibiotics cannot fight them, and the bacteria multiply.
3. Some resistant bacteria can be harder to treat and can spread to other people.

Each year in the United States, at least 2 million people get infected with antibiotic-resistant bacteria. At least 23,000 people die as a result.

What is the right way to take antibiotics?

If you need antibiotics, take them exactly as prescribed.

Improving the way healthcare professionals prescribe antibiotics, and the way we take antibiotics, helps keep us healthy now, helps fight antibiotic resistance, and ensures that these life-saving drugs will be available for future generations.

Talk with your doctor if you have any questions about your antibiotics, or if you develop any side effects, especially diarrhea, since that could be Clostridium difficile infection (also called C. diff) or C. diff, which needs to be treated. C. diff can lead to severe colon damage and death.

What are the side effects?

Common side effects range from minor to very severe health problems and can include:

- Rash
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Diarrhea
- Yeast infections

More serious side effects can include:

- Clostridium difficile infection
- Severe and life-threatening allergic reactions

To learn more about antibiotic prescribing and use, visit www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

Antibiotics Aren't Always the Answer.

BE ANTIBIOTICS AWARE
SMART USE, BEST CARE

Fact Sheets

BE ANTIBIOTICS AWARE
SMART USE, BEST CARE

U.S. ANTIBIOTIC AWARENESS WEEK
November 13-19, 2017
www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use

U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week (USAAMW) is an annual observance highlighting the importance of being Antibiotics Aware and the steps everyone can take to improve antibiotic use or prescribing, improving the way healthcare professionals prescribe antibiotics, and the way we take antibiotics, helps keep us healthy now, helps fight antibiotic resistance, and ensures that these life-saving drugs will be available for future generations. CDC encourages healthcare professionals, patients, and families to learn more about antibiotic prescribing and use.

When antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help you, and the side effects could still hurt you. Here are seven facts you should know to be Antibiotics Aware:

- 1. Antibiotics save lives.** When a patient needs antibiotics, the benefits outweigh the risks of side effects or antibiotic resistance.
- 2. Antibiotics aren't always the answer.** Everyone can help improve antibiotic prescribing or use.
- 3. Antibiotics do not work on viruses,** such as colds and flu, or runny noses, even if the mucus is thick, yellow or green.
- 4. Antibiotics are only needed for treating certain infections caused by bacteria.** Antibiotics also won't help some common bacterial infections including most cases of bronchitis, many sinus infections, and some ear infections.
- 5. An antibiotic will not make you feel better if you have a virus.** Respiratory viruses usually go away in a week or two without treatment. Ask your healthcare professional about the best way to feel better while your body fights off the virus.
- 6. Taking antibiotics creates resistant bacteria.** Antibiotic resistance occurs when bacteria no longer respond to the drugs designed to kill them.
- 7. If you need antibiotics, take them exactly as prescribed.** Talk with your doctor if you have any questions about your antibiotics, or if you develop any side effects, especially diarrhea, since that could be a C. difficile (C. diff) infection, which needs to be treated.

ANTIBIOTICS AREN'T ALWAYS THE ANSWER.

Antibiotics save lives. Improving the way healthcare professionals prescribe antibiotics, and the way we take antibiotics, helps keep us healthy now, helps fight antibiotic resistance, and ensures that these life-saving drugs will be available for future generations.

The Facts:

When a patient needs antibiotics, the benefits outweigh the risks of side effects or antibiotic resistance.

When antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help you, and the side effects could still hurt you.

Common side effects of antibiotics can include rash, dizziness, nausea, diarrhea, or yeast infections. More serious side effects include Clostridium difficile infection (also called C. diff) or C. diff, which causes diarrhea that can lead to severe colon damage and death. People can also have severe and life-threatening allergic reactions.

Antibiotics do not work on viruses, such as colds and flu, or runny noses, even if the mucus is thick, yellow or green.

Antibiotics are only needed for treating certain infections caused by bacteria. Antibiotics also won't help for some common bacterial infections including most cases of bronchitis, many sinus infections, and some ear infections.

Taking antibiotics creates resistant bacteria. Antibiotic resistance occurs when bacteria no longer respond to the drugs designed to kill them.

Each year in the United States, at least 2 million people get infected with antibiotic-resistant bacteria. At least 23,000 people die as a result.

If you need antibiotics, take them exactly as prescribed. Talk with your doctor if you have any questions about your antibiotics, or if you develop any side effects, especially diarrhea, since that could be a C. difficile (C. diff) infection which needs to be treated.

Reactions from antibiotics cause 1 out of 5 medication-related visits to the emergency department. In children, reactions from antibiotics are the most common cause of medication-related emergency department visits.

BE ANTIBIOTICS AWARE
SMART USE, BEST CARE





Infographics

IMPROVING ANTIBIOTIC USE

Do I really need antibiotics?

SAY YES TO ANTIBIOTICS when needed for certain infections caused by **bacteria**.

SAY NO TO ANTIBIOTICS for **viruses**, such as colds and flu, or runny noses, even if the mucus is thick, yellow or green, and antibiotics also won't help for some common bacterial infections including most cases of bronchitis, many sinus infections, and some ear infections.

Antibiotics are only needed for treating certain infections caused by bacteria. Antibiotics do NOT work on viruses.

Do antibiotics have side effects?

Anytime antibiotics are used, they can cause side effects. When antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help you, and the side effects could still hurt you. Common side effects of antibiotics can include:

- Rash
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Yeast Infections
- Diarrhea

More serious side effects include Clostridium difficile infection (also called C. diff or C. diff), which causes diarrhea that can lead to severe colon damage and death. People can also have severe and life-threatening allergic reactions.

Antibiotics save lives. When a patient needs antibiotics, the benefits outweigh the risks of side effects.

1 out of 5 read call-to-related visits to the ID are from reactions to antibiotics.

Do I really need antibiotics?

SAY YES TO ANTIBIOTICS when needed for certain infections caused by **bacteria**.

SAY NO TO ANTIBIOTICS for **viruses** such as colds and flu, or runny noses, even if the mucus is thick, yellow or green. Antibiotics also won't help for some common bacterial infections including most cases of bronchitis, many sinus infections, and some ear infections.

Antibiotics are only needed for treating certain infections caused by bacteria. Antibiotics do not work on viruses.

To learn more about antibiotic prescribing and use, visit www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

Do antibiotics have side effects?

Anytime antibiotics are used, they can cause side effects. When antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help you, and the side effects could still hurt you. Common side effects of antibiotics can include:

- Rash
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Yeast Infections
- Diarrhea

More serious side effects include Clostridium difficile infection (also called C. difficile or C. diff), which causes diarrhea that can lead to severe colon damage and death. People can also have severe and life-threatening allergic reactions.

Antibiotics save lives. When a patient needs antibiotics, the benefits outweigh the risks of side effects.

To learn more about antibiotic prescribing and use, visit www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

What is antibiotic-resistant bacteria?

Antibiotic resistance occurs when bacteria no longer respond to the drugs designed to kill them. Anytime antibiotics are used, they can cause antibiotic resistance.

Each year in the U.S., at least 2 million people get infected with antibiotic-resistant bacteria. At least 23,000 people die as a result.

Bacteria, not the body, become resistant to the antibiotics designed to kill them.

When bacteria become resistant, antibiotics cannot fight them, and the bacteria multiply.

Some resistant bacteria can be harder to treat and can spread to other people.

To learn more about antibiotic prescribing and use, visit www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

Can I feel better without antibiotics?

Respiratory viruses usually go away in a week or two without treatment. To stay healthy and keep others healthy, you can:

- Clean Hands
- Cover Coughs
- Stay Home When Sick
- Get Recommended Vaccines

To learn more about antibiotic prescribing and use, visit www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

Viruses or Bacteria, What's Got You Sick? Chart

Viruses or Bacteria What's got you sick?

Antibiotics are only needed for treating certain infections caused by bacteria. Viral illnesses cannot be treated with antibiotics. When an antibiotic is not prescribed, ask your healthcare professional for tips on how to relieve symptoms and feel better.

Common Condition	Common Cause			Are Antibiotics Needed?
	Bacteria	Bacteria or Virus	Virus	
Strep throat	✓			Yes
Whooping cough	✓			Yes
Urinary tract infection	✓			Yes
Sinus infection		✓		Maybe
Middle ear infection		✓		Maybe
Bronchitis/chest cold (in otherwise healthy children and adults)*		✓		No*
Common cold/runny nose			✓	No
Sore throat (except strep)			✓	No
Flu			✓	No

* Studies show that in otherwise healthy children and adults, antibiotics for bronchitis won't help you feel better.



To learn more about antibiotic prescribing and use, visit www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.



Antibiotics Aren't Always the Answer Animated Video

ANTIBIOTICS

AREN'T

ALWAYS THE ANSWER



[Antibiotics Aren't Always the Answer Animated Video](#)



For Healthcare Professionals

Do You Need Antibiotics? Poster for Waiting Areas/Exam Rooms

DO YOU NEED ANTIBIOTICS?

BE ANTIBIOTICS AWARE
SMART USE, BEST CARE

You feel sick and miserable and want to get better fast. It could be a cold or even the flu. You're probably thinking you need antibiotics to knock out your illness and help you feel better. **Not so fast!** When antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help you, and the side effects could still hurt you.

8 WAYS TO BE ANTIBIOTICS AWARE

- 1 Antibiotics save lives, but they aren't always the answer when you're sick.
- 2 Antibiotics do not work on viruses.
- 3 Antibiotics are only needed for treating certain infections caused by bacteria.
- 4 An antibiotic will NOT make you feel better if you have a virus.
- 5 Any time antibiotics are used, they can cause side effects.
- 6 Taking antibiotics creates resistant bacteria.
- 7 If you need antibiotics, take them exactly as prescribed.
- 8 Stay healthy: clean hands, cover coughs, and get vaccinated, for the flu, for example.

Talk to your healthcare professional about the best way to feel better.

To learn more about antibiotic prescribing and use, visit www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

Be Antibiotics Aware Stickers





Be Antibiotics Aware Static Counter and Window Clings

**BE
ANTIBIOTICS
AWARE**
SMART USE, BEST CARE

Antibiotics aren't always the answer when you're sick.
Ask your doctor how you can feel better.

For more information on antibiotic prescribing and use,
visit www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

**BE
ANTIBIOTICS
AWARE**
SMART USE, BEST CARE

Antibiotics aren't always the answer when you're sick.
Ask your doctor how you can feel better.

For more information on antibiotic prescribing and use, visit
www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

A Commitment to Our Patients Regarding Antibiotics Poster

**A Commitment to Our Patients
About Antibiotics**

Antibiotics only fight infections caused by bacteria. Like all drugs, they can be harmful and should only be used when necessary. Taking antibiotics when you have a virus can do more harm than good: you will still feel sick and the antibiotic could give you a skin rash, diarrhea, a yeast infection, or worse.

Antibiotics also give bacteria a chance to become more resistant to them. This can make future infections harder to treat. It means that antibiotics might not work when you really do need them. Because of this, it is important that you only use an antibiotic when it is necessary to treat your illness.

How can you help? When you have a cough, sore throat, or other illness, tell your doctor you only want an antibiotic if it is really necessary. If you are not prescribed an antibiotic, ask what you can do to feel better and get relief from your symptoms.

Your health is important to us. As your healthcare providers, we promise to provide the best possible treatment for your condition. If an antibiotic is not needed, we will explain this to you and will offer a treatment plan that will help. We are dedicated to prescribing antibiotics only when they are needed, and we will avoid giving you antibiotics when they might do more harm than good.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask us.

Sincerely,

To learn more about antibiotic prescribing and use, visit www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

Prescription Pads

Symptom Relief for Viral Illnesses

BE ANTIBIOTICS AWARE
SMART USE, BEST CARE

1. DIAGNOSIS

Taking Your Antibiotics

Cold or cough
 Middle ear fluid
 Chills, fevers, rash
 Flu
 Viral sore throat
 Bronchitis
 Other: _____

You have been diagnosed with a viral infection and antibiotics aren't needed. The only way to get or prevent these viruses is to avoid them and wash your hands often.

3. SPECIFIC MEDICATIONS

Fever or aches
 Ear pain
 Sore throat and

Use medicines according to a doctor's prescription.

Signed: _____

To learn more about us, visit www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use

BE ANTIBIOTICS AWARE
SMART USE, BEST CARE

READ THIS IMPORTANT INFORMATION.

You have just filled a prescription for antibiotics.

Take it exactly as your healthcare professional tells you.
 Do not skip doses.
 Do not share it with others.
 Do not save it for later. Talk to your pharmacist about safely discarding leftover medicines.

WHY IS THIS CHECKLIST SO IMPORTANT?

All medicines can have side effects. Antibiotics save lives, and when a patient needs antibiotics, the benefits outweigh the risks of side effects. You can protect yourself and others by learning when antibiotics are and are not needed.

If you have questions about your antibiotics, talk with your healthcare professional.
To learn more about antibiotic prescribing and use, visit www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.



What Is Watchful Waiting?

BE ANTIBIOTICS AWARE
SMART USE, BEST CARE

GOOD NEWS

What Is Delayed Prescribing?

BE ANTIBIOTICS AWARE
SMART USE, BEST CARE

WAIT. DO NOT FILL YOUR PRESCRIPTION JUST YET.

Your healthcare professional believes your illness may resolve on its own. First, follow your healthcare professional's recommendations to help you feel better without antibiotics. Continue to monitor your own symptoms over the next few days.

Rest.
 Drink extra water and fluids.
 Use a cool mist vaporizer or saline nasal spray to relieve congestion.
 For sore throats in adults and older children, try ice chips, sore throat spray, or lozenges.
 Use honey to relieve cough. Do not give honey to an infant younger than 1.


If you do not feel better in _____ days/hours or feel worse, go ahead and fill your prescription.

If you feel better, you do not need the antibiotic, and do not have to risk the side effects.

Waiting to see if you really need an antibiotic can help you take antibiotics only when needed. When antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help you, and the side effects could still hurt you. Common side effects of antibiotics can include rash, diarrhea, nausea, dizziness, and yeast infections.

Antibiotics save lives, and when a patient needs antibiotics, the benefits outweigh the risks of side effects. You can protect yourself and others by learning when antibiotics are and are not needed.

To learn more about antibiotic prescribing and use, visit www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.



Additional CDC Resources

Sepsis Resources

- [Get Ahead of Sepsis](#) educational effort (NEW)

Stewardship Report

- [Antibiotic Use in the United States, 2017: Progress and Opportunities](#)

Core Elements

- Antibiotic Stewardship Core Elements at Small and Critical Access Hospitals



www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use

