

About Antibiotic Resistance

- Antibiotic resistance has been called one of the world's most pressing public health problems.
- The number of bacteria resistant to antibiotics has increased in the past ten years.
- Repeated and improper use of antibiotics are the primary causes of the increase in drug-resistant bacteria.
- Decreasing inappropriate antibiotic use is the best way to control resistance.
- Children are of particular concern because they have the highest rate of infection caused by antibiotic-resistant bacteria.
- Antibiotic resistance can cause significant danger and suffering for people who have common infections that were once easily treatable with antibiotics. When antibiotics fail to work, the results are longer illness, more doctor visits or longer hospital stays, and the need for more expensive and more toxic medications. Some resistant infections can cause death.

This information has been brought to you by NJ CAUSE (Careful Antibiotic Use Strategies and Education), the Antimicrobial Resistance Task Force of New Jersey.

NJ CAUSE is a diverse work group comprised of public health and health care professionals dedicated to making a positive impact on this growing public health threat.

For more information call the NJDHSS Communicable Disease Service at

609-588-7500

nj.gov/health/cd/mrsa/index.shtml

Antibiotics



Good reasons for taking your pills correctly!





PROTECTING THE POWER OF ANTIBIOTICS

You have been given antibiotic medication to treat an infection caused by bacteria. It is very important to take the antibiotics **EXACTLY** as prescribed.

If antibiotics are not taken properly, the bacteria may not be completely killed and any remaining bacteria may be even harder to treat. This process is called antibiotic resistance and it is becoming a very serious public health problem. We must all do our part to protect the power of antibiotics!

Here are some ways you can make sure that antibiotics will continue to work for future generations:

- **Do not share your antibiotics with others.** You have received the exact number of pills needed to fully treat your infection.
- **Do not save some for the next time you get sick.** The antibiotics you are taking now may not be the best choice for future infections.

- **Finish taking all of the pills even if you begin to feel better.** You may begin to feel better before all of the bacteria are killed by the antibiotics. Stopping antibiotics before all of the bacteria are killed can make the remaining bacteria stronger and harder to kill.
- **Call your health care provider if you have any questions.**

Good Reasons to Take Your Pills

- Antibiotics are safe.
- Antibiotics are effective for treating bacterial infections.
- Antibiotics will help prevent the spread of this infection to other people.
- Taking antibiotics **EXACTLY** as prescribed can protect the power of antibiotics.

Coping With Side Effects

Sometimes when people take antibiotics, they may have unpleasant side effects. Some of the side effects that may occur are nausea, diarrhea, headaches, and yeast infections (for females).

If you have any side effects, talk to your health care provider right away. Do not stop taking the antibiotics unless your health care provider tells you to do so. You should know that side effects are usually mild and there are things you can do to feel better. If your health care provider thinks that your new symptoms are being caused by the antibiotics, s/he may suggest easy self-help strategies to help you cope.

