

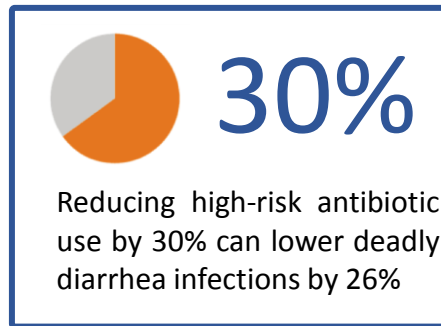
## How can antibiotic resistance affect me?

Infections that are caused by resistant bacteria are hard to treat and need special antibiotics. These antibiotics generally have to be given through an IV line. Sometimes we have to use more than one antibiotic and give them for a long time. This may cause side effects and other problems.

## We work to improve antibiotic use at our hospital

Our hospital works to give the right antibiotic to the right patient, at the right time, and with the right amount, causing the least harm. We have a team of doctors, pharmacists, nurses, and hospital managers that work together to improve antibiotic use and care:

- We make life-saving antibiotics available when needed
- We work to reduce the spread of infections
- We save some antibiotics for certain infections
- We provide teaching about the best ways to use antibiotics
- We watch which antibiotics are used and why



## Get Smart about antibiotics when you leave the hospital

Before leaving the hospital, talk to your healthcare team about your antibiotics. Be sure to ask questions like:

- Will I keep taking it or will it be changed?
- When should I take it and for how long?
- Does the antibiotic have any side effects?
- What do I do if side effects happen to me?
- When do I need to make an appointment to check in with my doctor?

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# Taking Antibiotics in the Hospital

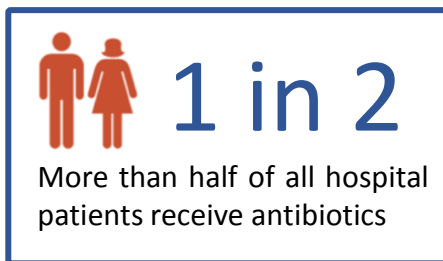


Information for Patients  
and Their Families

## When should antibiotics be used in the hospital?

Antibiotics are frequently used in the hospital to cure and prevent infections. Antibiotics are given for a set amount of time or until an infection has cleared. Taking antibiotics for problems not caused by infections does not help and may even cause harm. If your doctor thinks antibiotics will not help, antibiotics should be stopped. It is not safe to keep taking antibiotics if you do not have an infection because this can cause side effects.

Sometimes antibiotics are given to prevent infections. For example, patients may be given an antibiotic before and during a surgery to prevent an infection. Doctors might give antibiotics to prevent infections in patients with weak immune systems who cannot fight infections by themselves.



## Get Smart about antibiotics while you are in the hospital

When you are given an antibiotic, you should be informed. Ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist:

- Why am I taking it?
- What is the name of it?
- How will it be given to me while I am in the hospital?
- How long will I need to take it?
- Are there any side effects to look out for?

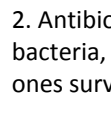
### Resistance to antibiotics

Resistance happens when bacteria learn how to keep the antibiotics from killing them. This means that an antibiotic that used to work may no longer work for some infections. Resistance to antibiotics is spreading fast.

### How antibiotic resistance happens



1. Lots of bacteria. A few are drug-resistant.



2. Antibiotics kill most bacteria, but a few resistant ones survive.



3. These drug-resistant bacteria then grow and take over.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

## Asking about your antibiotics can help you...



### Resistance to antibiotics

Using too many antibiotics or the wrong antibiotics are the major causes of resistance. For example, giving antibiotics for infections caused by viruses, such as the common cold, flu, or bronchitis can cause resistance in bacteria.

As a family member, it is a natural feeling to want to ask for antibiotics every time you think your loved one is sick. Sadly, antibiotics are not like other drugs. Using an antibiotic in one patient changes the way it works in others. Each time antibiotics are given, bacteria become smarter. Soon, bacteria get so smart that antibiotics can no longer kill them. It is important we save antibiotics for patients that really need them. Antibiotics are usually safe, but using them in the wrong way could cause more problems and cost more money.