

Snort Sniffle Sneeze: No Antibiotics Please

This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

[Woman 1] Achoo!

[Child] You know how frustrating it is trying to help your kids when they're sick.

[Man 1] I don't feel so good.

[Child] A visit to the doctor's office can be a challenge.

[Man 2] No I don't want you to take my temperature... no.

[Woman 2] I wish it would feel better. My ear.

[Child Doctor] As a parent, you want to help make *your* child feel better as fast as possible. It's tempting to think that antibiotics are the answer when your child is sick, but that may not always be the case.

You don't look so good.

A lot of illnesses can be caused by viruses and antibiotics don't work on viruses. In fact, antibiotics are strong medicines that can have serious side effects.

[Doctor] I'm a doctor but also the mother of two kids so I've seen my share of waiting rooms like this. She's right; if antibiotics are used too often for things they can't treat, like colds, flu, or other viral infections, they can stop working effectively against bacteria when you really need them.

Antibiotic resistance - when antibiotics can no longer cure bacterial infections - has been a concern for years. Everyday problems can become much worse if we can't use our first line of defense. Children can need hospitalization for superbugs that don't respond to common antibiotics. As a parent, you can do something. For example, understand that many ear infections and sore throats may not need antibiotics. Work with your doctor to understand the difference between infections that are viral and don't respond to antibiotics, like the cold or the flu, and infections that are bacterial and do respond to antibiotics, like strep throat. Always follow the directions on any antibiotic prescription. This means taking the prescribed amount of medicine, even if feeling better and not sharing or saving antibiotics, not even for other family members. Antibiotics are a powerful tool, but you wouldn't slice a tomato with a chainsaw, right?

Antibiotics may not always *be* the answer. Learn more by working with your doctor or other health care provider to make sure your children always get the best treatment that's exactly right for them.

Let's see how our other doctor is doing with her patients and find out what treatments might help.

[Child Doctor] Soothe a sore throat with ice chips, sore throat spray, or lozenges but don't give lozenges to young children. Use a decongestant or saline nasal spray to help relieve nasal symptoms. Put a warm moist cloth over an ear that hurts. To help relieve a cough, use a clean humidifier or cool mist vaporizer or try breathing in steam from a bowl of hot water or a shower. You might need some pain reliever for that ache or fever.

[Doctor] It looks like her patients are in good hands. But remember, not all over-the-counter products are recommended for kids of certain ages. Your pharmacist can help you make the right choice. Learn more by visiting our website. We can all get smart about antibiotics.

[Child Doctor and Doctor] I guess moms and doctors can work together.

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