



Australian Government

# Do I need antibiotics?

Antibiotics only work against infections caused by bacteria  
They will not work against infections caused by viruses



Antibiotics are **often** used to treat bacterial infections, such as:



Whooping cough



Strep throat



Urinary tract infection



Antibiotics are **sometimes** used to treat infections, such as:



Sinus infection



Middle ear infection



Antibiotics make **no** difference to viral infections, such as:



Colds and the flu



Sore throat



Bronchitis/ chest cold

## Using antibiotics when you don't need them:

- can give you side effects (like an upset stomach, diarrhoea, rash) without making you better
- can cause the bacteria in your body to become resistant to antibiotics
- might make treating serious infections difficult in the future

Ask your health professional about how best to treat your symptoms if you do not need antibiotics  
Always consult your health professional if you are worried about your health



For further information visit: [www.amr.gov.au](http://www.amr.gov.au)