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

Urinary tract infection

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

Strep throat*

Sinus infection

Middle ear infection

Antibiotics make no difference to viral infections, such as:

Colds and the flu

Sore throat

Bronchitis/ chest cold

* A strep throat is an infection caused by bacteria, which your doctor can test for, while a sore throat is mostly caused by a viral infection.

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**