

GPs face enormous pressure from patients to prescribe antibiotics for minor illnesses.

Antibiotics are very effective drugs, as long as they are used appropriately – contrary to popular misunderstanding antibiotics do not work on viral illnesses.

Unfortunately the harsh reality now is that infections are developing that cannot be effectively treated by antibiotics – this is because some harmful organisms “outwit” antibiotics and have become “resistant” to them.

We could be close to reaching a point where antibiotics may not be able to prevent or treat everyday infections or diseases.

To reduce the chances of this Doctors are now encouraged to prescribe antibiotics with caution.



Careful use of antibiotics means they will be more likely to work when needed.

Trust your GP's clinical decision

There is clear medical evidence that inappropriate prescribing of antibiotics can increase the possibility of infection from the “Super-Bugs” such as:

- **Clostridium Difficile &**
- **MRSA**

The information overleaf explains why your Doctor has not given you a prescription today, together with advice on how best to look after yourself through this period of minor illness and what to do if you are not getting better.

For further information see:

www.nhschoices.com

www.patient.co.uk

Working in partnership with:

Lancashire
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NHS
Fylde and Wyre
Clinical Commissioning Group



Trust your GP's clinical decision

Antibiotics may not always be the answer...

NHS
Lancashire North
Clinical Commissioning Group

Guide to treat your infection

Patient's name:

.....

No antibiotic prescription given

Back-up antibiotic prescription given today but it should only be collected after days if needed from: **surgery reception** **GP** **Pharmacy**

Why did you not get antibiotics today?

- Colds and most coughs, sinusitis, otitis media, sore throats, ear and other infections often get better without antibiotics, as your body can usually fight these infections on its own.
- The table below shows you how long these illnesses normally last, what you can do to ease your symptoms and when you should go back to your GP or contact NHS services.

Please tick	Illness	Usual length of illness	What you can do to ease the symptoms?	When should you (or your child) go back to your GP practice or contact NHS 111, NHS 24, or NHS Direct Wales (dial 0845 4647)?
	Middle ear	4 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have plenty of rest. • Drink enough fluids to avoid feeling thirsty. • Ask your local pharmacist to recommend medicines to help your pain or other symptoms (or both). • Fever is a sign the body is fighting the infection and usually gets better by itself in most cases. You can use paracetamol (or ibuprofen) if you or your child is uncomfortable as a result of a fever. • Other things you can do suggested by GP or nurse. <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first eight of these are potentially signs of serious illness and should be assessed urgently. • Telephone for advice if you are uncertain about the urgency. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you develop a severe headache and are vomiting. 2. If your skin is very cold or has a strange colour, or you develop an unusual rash. 3. If you feel confused or have slurred speech or are very drowsy. 4. If you have difficulty breathing. Signs that suggest breathing problems can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o breathing quickly, o turning blue around the lips and the skin below the mouth, o skin between or above the ribs getting sucked or pulled in with every breath. 5. If you develop chest pain. 6. If you have difficulty swallowing or are drooling. 7. If you cough up blood. 8. If you are feeling a lot worse. <p>Less serious signs that can usually wait until the next available GP appointment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. If you are not improving by the time given in the 'Usual length of illness' column. 10. Children with middle ear infection: if fluid is coming out of their ears or new hearing problems. 11. Other.
	Sore throat	7 days		
	Common cold	10 days		
	Sinusitis	18 days		
	Cough	21 days		
	Other infection			