

Back-up Antibiotics – What You Need to Know For children aged 2 and over



Your child had an appointment on:

.....

You were told to wait days before
using the antibiotic prescription.



In this leaflet, ‘prescriber’ means someone
that writes a note, called a prescription, for
a medicine. A ‘prescriber’ can be a doctor,
nurse, pharmacist or other healthcare
worker.

What are antibiotics?



Antibiotics are medicines used to fight some infections.

What is a back-up antibiotic prescription?



A back-up prescription means your child has an antibiotic prescription, but you should wait to see if they need it.



This helps make sure antibiotics are used only when they are really needed.

It also helps them work well in the future.

Why has my child been given a back-up antibiotic prescription?



The prescriber has checked your child.

They think your child might have an infection.



If your child is usually healthy and they have had all their vaccines, their body can often fight infections on its own.

Their body can fight:

- Colds
- Most coughs
- Sore throats
- Earache

As most of these are caused by viruses.



Antibiotics do not work for viruses.

Your child's body can fight some infections on its own without antibiotics.



Only collect the antibiotic if your child:

- Gets worse
- Or doesn't start to feel better after the number of days the prescriber told you to wait.

Why not use antibiotics straight away?



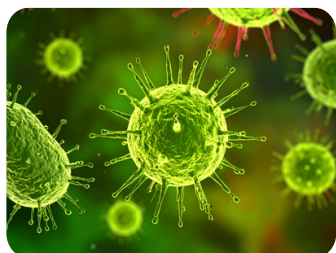
Antibiotics can sometimes cause:

- Upset tummy
- Diarrhoea (runny poo)
- Feeling sick
- Skin rashes



If someone uses antibiotics when they do not need them, germs can get stronger.

Next time, the antibiotic might not work when they need it.



This is called **antibiotic resistance**.

- To find about antibiotic resistance, visit:
www.nhs.uk/medicines/antibiotics/antibiotic-antimicrobial-resistance

When will my child feel better?



Most children start to feel better in a few days without antibiotics.

Some symptoms can take longer to go away.



Sore ear:

- Can last 3 - 7 days



Sore throat:

- Can last 4 to 7 days



Cold:

- Can last 14 days



Cough:

- Can last 1 to 3 weeks



Your child probably will not need the antibiotic if:

- They are not getting worse
- And are slowly improving

How long should I wait before using the antibiotic?



The prescriber will tell you how many days to wait.

For example: “Wait 3 days. If your child isn’t feeling better by then, start the antibiotic.”

What if my child gets new or worrying symptoms?



The prescriber will tell you what signs to look out for. You can also find more information from www.healthiertogether.nhs.uk.



If your child gets worse, or if you are worried, get help from:

- Your GP
- NHS 111
- Your local pharmacy
 - To find your local pharmacy, visit: www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy.
- A&E or call 999 for emergencies



You know your child’s body best.

If something feels wrong, get help.

How do I get the antibiotic if my child needs it?



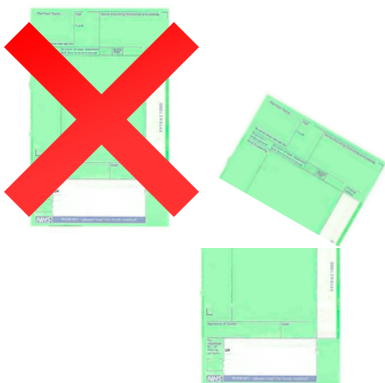
The prescriber will tell you how to get the medicine.



You might:

- Get a paper prescription to take to the pharmacy
- Be told to pick up a prescription from your GP surgery
- Be given a token for an electronic prescription — take the token to a pharmacy

What if my child doesn't need the antibiotic?



If your child feels better, don't collect or use the antibiotic.

If you already have the paper prescription, you can:

- Tear it up or shred it
- Return it to your GP practice



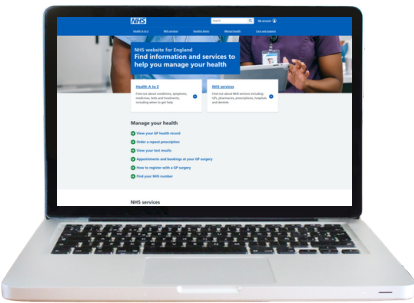
If you already have the antibiotic medicine, you can return it to your local pharmacy.

They will throw it away safely.



Don't save the paper prescription or the antibiotic medicine for later.

It might not be the right medicine next time.



You can get more advice from:

- www.healthiertogether.nhs.uk
- www.nhs.uk

What to do

- Wait the number of days the prescriber told you
- If your child starts to feel better → **Do not use the antibiotic**
- If your child does not feel better → **Start the antibiotic**
- If your child gets worse → **Get help**