



# BECOME AN ANTIBIOTIC GUARDIAN

Keep Antibiotics Working

## World Antimicrobial\* Awareness Week (18-24 November)

### Here are some simple actions you can do to help Keep Antibiotics Working:

- Don't ask for antibiotics if you have a cough or cold.
- Many infections get better on their own, so antibiotics are only needed for more serious infections.
- Go to the [NHS website](#) and [NHS 111](#) online for advice about how to manage your symptoms, and when to visit your pharmacist, general practice or emergency care.
- If the doctor does prescribe you antibiotics, take them exactly as prescribed;
- Never save antibiotics for later and never share them with others.
- Spread the word. Tell your friends and family how to Keep Antibiotics Working. You can find out more via [www.antibioticguardian.com](http://www.antibioticguardian.com)

### How to look after yourself when you have an infection to help you feel better

- Get plenty of rest.
- Make sure you or your child drink enough to avoid feeling thirsty.
- Take paracetamol for pain, (read instructions on the box carefully)
- Fever is a sign the body is fighting the infection and usually gets better by itself.
- Find out more about how to manage common infections via the [PHE Self Care for Common Infections Leaflet](#).

### You can help prevent infections spreading to your family or friends by:

- Catching sneezes or coughs with a tissue and throwing the tissue in to a bin.
- Regularly cleaning your hands with soap and water or alcohol gel for 20 seconds - especially after you have sneezed or coughed.
- Vaccines protect you and as you are protected from infections – others are too.
- Physical distancing, staying at home and getting tested, if you or someone that you live with develops symptoms of COVID-19, according to [government guidance](#).



There are also several fun educational activities – including new COVID-19 resources - linked to the national curricula to educate children on the e-Bug website ([www.e-bug.eu](http://www.e-bug.eu)).



### Why do we need to Keep Antibiotics Working?

Antibiotics do not work on viruses, such as colds, flu and COVID-19. Antibiotics are used to treat severe infections caused by bacteria, such as meningitis, pneumonia, urine infections and more severe throat and ear infections. However, bacteria are continually adapting to develop new ways of escaping treatment. This is called antibiotic resistance and is one of the biggest risks facing everyone. This resistance can spread between different bacteria in our bodies and between people (whether they are healthy or ill). The more often a person takes antibiotics, the more likely they are to develop drug resistant bacteria in the body. To **Keep Antibiotics Working** and prevent resistance, only take them when you really need them, and always take them as advised by your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

\* Antimicrobials are medicines used to prevent and treat infections caused by microorganisms (bacteria, virus, fungi and parasites) in humans, animals and plants. They include antibiotics, antivirals, antifungals and antiparasitics