



## A Commitment to Improving Antibiotic Use

Antibiotics are powerful, lifesaving medications. We are **dedicated** to prescribing antibiotics when they are needed, and we will avoid prescribing antibiotics when they are not needed as they may do harm. When your healthcare professional prescribes antibiotics, take them as directed.

Antibiotics fight infections caused by **bacteria**. Antibiotics don't work against **viruses** that cause the common cold, most coughs, and sore throats.

You can experience side effects while taking antibiotics. Common side effects could include a skin rash, diarrhea, or a yeast infection. More serious side effects could include a *C. diff* infection, which causes severe diarrhea that can lead to severe colon damage and death.

Using antibiotics also gives bacteria a chance to become more resistant to them. This can make future infections harder to treat, which means that antibiotics might not work when you really do need them.

Taking antibiotics only when needed helps keep you healthy, helps fight antibiotic resistance, and ensures that these life-saving drugs will be available for future generations.

We will answer any questions about the role of antibiotics in your treatment.

*Sincerely,*



To learn more about antibiotic prescribing and use, visit [www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use](http://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.

