

Four Questions To Ask Your Doctor or Nurse About Antibiotics

Question 1 Do I need an antibiotic?

Before starting an antibiotic, your provider should consider these alternatives:

- Increase fluids
- Encourage rest
- Treat pain
- Review other medications

Question 2 Is this the right antibiotic?

Cultures and other laboratory tests help your doctor and nurse know if an antibiotic will work. These should be collected before starting an antibiotic. It may take several days to get results.

Question 3 How long do I need to be on antibiotics?

Most bacterial infections can be treated with 5 to 7 days of antibiotics:

- Urinary tract infection
- Pneumonia
- Cellulitis
- Some bloodstream infections

Question 4 Do I still need to take antibiotics?

Your doctor or nurse should check back with you in a few days to see if you are feeling better and share test results. If it turns out you did not have a bacterial infection, the antibiotics should be stopped.

