

I've got an infection, I need ~~antibiotics~~ **self help!**

Don't become resistant

The unnecessary use of antibiotics will slow down resistance, which means antibiotics are less likely to work at times when you really need them. Not all infections need antibiotics, your body has its own defence mechanisms to help fight infections.

Think **self help** and do the following:

- Rest as much as you can
- Drink plenty of water
- Speak to a pharmacist who can offer you help and treatments
- Prevent the spread of infection by washing your hands thoroughly.
- If you've a fever, this is a sign your body is fighting the infection and will usually get better by itself. But, if you're uncomfortable try paracetamol.

The time it takes for an infection to get better varies, but here's a guide:

Cough or bronchitis	21 days
Sinusitis	14 – 21 days
Sore throat	7 – 8 days
Middle-ear infections	8 days

You should get help if you are concerned or develop any of the following symptoms:

- severe headache
- sickness
- confusion
- drowsiness
- slurred speech
- breathing difficulties
- chest pain
- cough up blood
- have difficulty swallowing
- you develop a rash or your skin is cold or a strange colour.

Call your practice or dial 111 for advice.

Remember, your pharmacist can help in assessing your symptoms