

Bronchitis and Other Cough Illnesses in Adults



Just because you have a cough or bronchitis, does NOT mean you need an antibiotic. Here is why your doctor MAY NOT prescribe antibiotics for you:

More than 90% of coughs (including bronchitis) in adults are caused by VIRUSES. Antibiotics do not kill viruses. Your body will kill the viruses on its own. The cough can last for a few weeks even after the infection is gone.

You can do something to FEEL better in the meantime.

You CAN:

➔ Take acetaminophen (like Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (like Advil® and Motrin®) for throat pain, headache and/or fever *as directed by your doctor.*

- ➔ Drink extra water, juice and soups.
- ➔ Take over-the-counter cough medicines at night to help you sleep. (These may make you sleepy or jittery if you take them during the day.)
- ➔ You should NEVER use someone else's inhaler or medicine. Sometimes when your doctor thinks it will help, he or she may prescribe an inhaler for your cough. This should only be used *as directed by your doctor!*

If your doctor does prescribe an antibiotic:

- ➔ Take ALL of your antibiotic AS DIRECTED, even if you feel better before you've finished your antibiotic! Taking all your antibiotics can help to prevent getting sick again.
- ➔ STOP the antibiotic and CALL your doctor if a rash or prolonged diarrhea develops.
- ➔ NEVER use leftover antibiotics, yours or anyone else's.

Talk to your doctor about taking the right drug for the right bug!



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