



Questions to Ask Your Healthcare Professional

If your child is sick, here are three important questions to ask your healthcare professional:

1. What is the best treatment for my child's illness?

Your child can feel better without an antibiotic. Respiratory viruses usually go away in a week or two without treatment. Ask your healthcare professional about the best way to feel better while your child's body fights off the virus.

Common Condition	Common Cause			Are Antibiotics Needed?
	Bacteria	Bacteria or Virus	Virus	
Strep throat	✓			Yes
Whooping cough	✓			Yes
Urinary tract infection	✓			Yes
Sinus infection		✓		Maybe
Middle ear infection		✓		Maybe
Bronchitis/chest cold (in otherwise healthy children and adults)*		✓		No*
Common cold/runny nose			✓	No
Sore throat (except strep)			✓	No
Flu			✓	No

* Studies show that in otherwise healthy children and adults, antibiotics for bronchitis won't help you feel better.

2. What do I need to know about the antibiotics you're prescribing for my child today?

The antibiotic prescribed should be the one most targeted to treat the infection, while causing the least side effects. Some types of antibiotics, such as fluoroquinolones, have a stronger link to severe side effects such as life-threatening *C. diff* infections. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) warns healthcare professionals to only prescribe fluoroquinolones when another treatment option is unavailable. These powerful antibiotics are often prescribed even when they are not the recommended treatment.

3. What can I do to help my child feel better?

Pain relievers, fever reducers, saline nasal spray or drops, warm compresses, liquids, and rest may be the best ways to help your child feel better. Your healthcare professional can tell you how to help relieve your child's symptoms.

To learn more about antibiotic prescribing and use, visit www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

