

# The ABCs of Prescribing Antibiotics for Healthcare Professionals



## Infection Prevention and You

Learn more about antibiotic resistance at [apic.org/infectionpreventionandyou](http://apic.org/infectionpreventionandyou) and [cdc.gov/antibiotic-use](http://cdc.gov/antibiotic-use).

## Ask Yourself

“Are these antibiotics necessary?”  
“What alternatives can we offer?”

## Bacteria

Antibiotics do not kill viruses, they kill bacteria. When possible, get a culture to determine if antibiotics will be effective.

## Conserve

Conserve the antibiotics we have by only prescribing when appropriate, and for the shortest duration possible. Consult your facility’s antibiogram for selection of appropriate antibiotics. Make sure your patients complete their course if you prescribe an antibiotic.

## Don’t give in to pressure

Don’t let patients pressure you into prescribing unnecessary antibiotics.

Do select the appropriate antibiotic, which could mean changing the medication based on the antibiogram.

## Educate

Educate your patients on WHY antibiotics are not needed for:

- ✗ Colds or flu;
- ✗ Most coughs and bronchitis;
- ✗ Sore throats not caused by strep;
- ✗ Runny noses; or
- ✗ Most ear aches.

**Using antibiotics the wrong way can cause bacteria to grow into superbugs. This could make your next infection much harder to treat.**



Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology

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