

## Take home messages

“There is mounting evidence of antibiotic harms to individual patients associated with unnecessary and/or prolonged antibiotic therapy. Antibiotic use needs to be considered a healthcare SAFETY issue.” (Arulkumuran *et al.*, Int. Care Med, 2020)

It is important to:

- ◆ Protect yourself and others from infection
- ◆ Talk with your healthcare professional about the best treatment for your illness.
- ◆ If you need antibiotics, take them exactly as prescribed. Talk with your healthcare professional if you have any questions about your antibiotics.
- ◆ Talk with your healthcare professional if you develop any side effects.

Content sources:

- ◆ [cdc.gov/cdiff](https://www.cdc.gov/cdiff)
- ◆ [cdc.gov/patientsafety](https://www.cdc.gov/patientsafety)
- ◆ [infectionpreventionandyou.org](https://www.infectionpreventionandyou.org)

SPREAD AWARENESS – STOP RESISTANCE

**WORLD  
ANTIMICROBIAL  
AWARENESS  
WEEK**

**18 - 24 NOVEMBER 2021**



**Antibiotics  
Antivirals  
Antifungals  
Antiparasitics**



# Antimicrobial-associated harm



Antibiotics can save lives, and when a patient needs antibiotics, the benefits usually outweigh the risks of side effects and antibiotic resistance. When antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help you, and the side effects could still cause harm. Common side effects of antibiotics can include:

- ◆ rash
- ◆ dizziness
- ◆ nausea
- ◆ diarrhea
- ◆ yeast infections

More serious side effects include *Clostridioides difficile* infection (also called *C. difficile* or *C. diff*), which causes severe diarrhea that can lead to severe colon damage and death. People can also have severe and life-threatening allergic reactions, such as wheezing, hives, shortness of breath, and anaphylaxis (which also includes feeling like your throat is closing or choking, or your voice is changing).

Good Hygiene: Keeping your family healthy

PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

The first line of defense is to keep germs at bay by following good personal hygiene habits. Prevent infection before it begins and avoid spreading it to others.

