# You are Smart

You are careful about taking medicines — and giving medicines to children. But there is a problem. Many people take antibiotics when they do not need them. Antibiotics do not work for every illness.

### What Is An Antibiotic?

An antibiotic is a medicine that destroys bacteria. Antibiotics have many different names such as penicillin and ampicillin.

# BE SMART

Antibiotics Will Not Help a **Cold** or the **Flu**.

Lela had a cold two weeks ago. Lela's grandmother did the right things. She made sure the child received plenty of rest and fluids... Grandmother knew that giving the child antibiotics would not be smart.

**For more information talk with your healthcare provider, call 1-888-246-2675 or go to**

**www.cdc.gov/getsmart**

# BE SMART

Antibiotics Will Not Help a **Cold** or the **Flu**.

### Antibiotics Will Not Work for a Cold or the Flu. Why?

- Germs called viruses cause colds and the flu
- Antibiotics do not fight viruses
- Antibiotics fight germs called bacteria

### Taking Antibiotics for a Cold or the Flu:

- Will not help your body fight a cold or the flu
- Will not get rid of your cold or flu symptoms
- Will not stop your cold or flu from spreading to others

### Antibiotics Do Not Work For:

- A Cold
- The Flu
- Most Coughs
- Bronchitis
- Sore throats (except those caused by strep

## What You Need To Know

### Will It Hurt Me to Take Antibiotics Every Time I Am Sick?

Taking antibiotics when you do not need them can make bacteria stronger. These bacteria are harder to kill. This is called antibiotic resistance.

### How Can Antibiotic Resistance Affect Me?

When bacteria resist antibiotics, you can get very sick. Antibiotics cannot cure your illness. You will need stronger medicine — or a stay in the hospital to get well.

### What If I Get An Antibiotic Prescription?

If your healthcare provider gives you antibiotics, you have an illness caused by bacteria. Take all of the medication as directed.

### How Can Antibiotic Resistance Affect My Community?

Sick people are not the only people who can suffer the consequences of antibiotic resistance. Families and entire communities feel the impact when disease-causing germs become resistant to antibiotics.

### How Can Antibiotic Resistance Affect Healthy People?

These antibiotic-resistant bacteria can quickly spread to:

- Family members
- School-mates
- Co-workers

### What Should I Do When I Have a Cold or the Flu?

- Talk with your healthcare provider
- Talk with your CHR (Community Health Representative)
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Rest
- Use a cool mist vaporizer or saline spray for congested breathing