



**WAIT.** Do not fill your prescription just yet. Your healthcare professional believes your illness may resolve on its own.

**First, follow your healthcare professional's recommendations to help you feel better without antibiotics and continue to monitor your own symptoms** over the next few days.

- Rest
- Drink extra water and fluids
- Use cool mist vaporizer or saline nasal spray to relieve congestion
- For sore throats in older adults and children, try ice chips, sore throat spray, or lozenges

If you **do not feel better in \_\_\_ days/hours, or get worse**, go ahead and fill your prescription.

If you **feel better, you do not need the antibiotic**, and do not have to risk the side effects.

**Waiting to see if you really need an antibiotic can help you take antibiotics only when it is actually necessary. Antibiotics can cause side effects like a skin rash, diarrhea, a yeast infection, or worse.**

**Antibiotics can also make future bacterial infections stronger and harder to treat. You can protect yourself and others by learning when antibiotics are and aren't needed.**



U.S. Department of  
Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention

For more information visit  
[www.cdc.gov/getsmart](http://www.cdc.gov/getsmart)