

**Contact Your Doctor
Again if:**

- Your symptoms get worse.
- Your symptoms last a long time.
- You begin to have shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.
- After feeling a little better, you develop signs of a more serious problem. Some of these signs are a sick-to-your-stomach feeling, vomiting, high fever, shaking chills or chest pain.



**U.S. Department of Health and
Human Services**
Food and Drug Administration

*A message from the
“Get Smart: Know When
Antibiotics Work”
Campaign.*

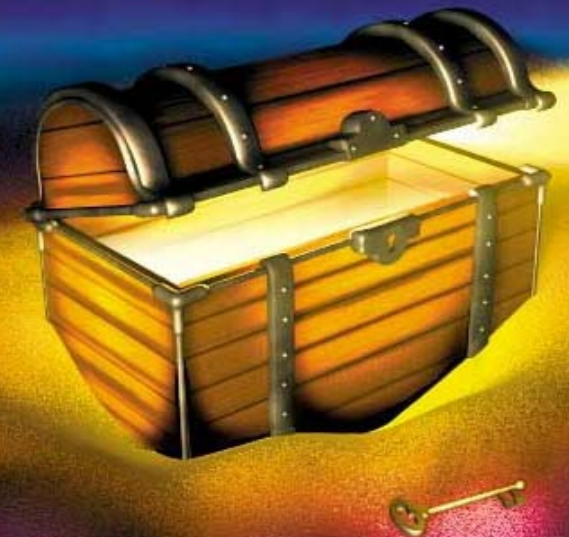
For more information:
[http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/
hottopics/anti_resist.html](http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/anti_resist.html)

(FDA) 07-1513A



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Food and Drug Administration

PRESERVE A TREASURE



**Know When
Antibiotics Work**

Cough?

Sore throat?

Runny nose?



You or a loved one feels miserable and you've come to the doctor looking for help.

Q: I'm sick. Don't I need a prescription for an antibiotic?

A: Your doctor has examined you and determined that your illness is caused by a viral infection.

Antibiotics do NOT treat viral illnesses like colds, flu and most sore throats.

Q: If antibiotics don't treat viral illnesses like cold and flu, what do they treat?

A: Antibiotics are used to treat illnesses caused by bacteria. Examples of illnesses caused by bacteria include strep throat, tuberculosis and many types of pneumonia.

Q: Even though my illness may be caused by a virus, what harm can it do to take an antibiotic?

A: Taking antibiotics when they aren't needed contributes to the serious problem of antibiotic resistance.

Q: What is antibiotic resistance?

A: When bacteria cannot be killed by antibiotics, they have become resistant. Over time, some infections may have to be treated with different and stronger antibiotics. In the future, it is possible that no antibiotic will be effective in killing resistant bacteria.

Q: If antibiotics will not help me, what will?

A: See the section in this brochure titled, "Help Yourself Feel Better While You Are Sick," and ask your health-care provider about any over-the-counter product available to treat the symptoms of your viral infection.



PRESERVE A TREASURE
Know When Antibiotics Work



Help Yourself Feel Better While You Are Sick

A cold usually lasts only a couple of days to a week. Feeling tired from the flu may continue for several weeks.

To feel better while you are sick:

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Use a cool mist vaporizer or a humidifier — an electric device that puts water into the air.
- Use saline nose spray to ease dry nasal passages.
- Use a medicine that reduces fever when needed.