# Viruses or Bacteria
## What's got you sick?

Antibiotics only treat bacterial infections. Viral illnesses cannot be treated with antibiotics. When an antibiotic is not prescribed, ask your healthcare professional for tips on how to relieve symptoms and feel better.

| Common Condition: What's got you sick? | Common Cause | | | Are antibiotics needed? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Bacteria** | **Bacteria or Virus** | **Virus** | |
| **Strep throat** | ✔ | | | **Yes** |
| **Whooping cough** | ✔ | | | **Yes** |
| **Urinary tract infection** | ✔ | | | **Yes** |
| **Sinus infection** | | ✔ | | **Maybe** |
| **Middle ear infection** | | ✔ | | **Maybe** |
| **Bronchitis/chest cold (in otherwise healthy children and adults)*** | | ✔ | | **No** |
| **Common cold/runny nose** | | | ✔ | **No** |
| **Sore throat (except strep)** | | | ✔ | **No** |
| **Flu** | | | ✔ | **No** |

* In some cases, acute bronchitis is caused by bacteria, but even in these cases antibiotics still do not help.

*Antibiotics Aren't Always the Answer*

www.cdc.gov/getsmart

**GET SMART**
Know When Antibiotics Work