



Taking antibiotics

Antibiotics are medicines that help your body fight infections caused by bacteria. They can be taken in different ways:

- Oral: Taken by mouth as pills or liquid
- Intravenous (IV): Medicine given into the bloodstream through a small tube which has been placed with a needle

Why oral instead of IV antibiotics?

Convenience

Antibiotics by mouth can be taken at home.

You don't need to stay in a hospital or visit a clinic daily.

Safety

There are fewer problems like vein irritation or an infection caused by an IV line.



Comfort

Needles or IV lines that can be uncomfortable are not needed.

Fewer resources

Using antibiotics by mouth instead of IV means much less time and inconvenience for you.

It uses fewer healthcare resources and has a smaller impact on the planet.



Are IV antibiotics stronger?

No. How well an antibiotic works depends on whether it can treat the bacteria causing the infection. It is not due to the way it is taken, by mouth or IV. For many of the most common infections, oral antibiotics work just as well as IV antibiotics.

When are IV antibiotics necessary?

- The infection is severe or life-threatening
- You cannot take medications by mouth
- The antibiotic needed to treat a specific bacteria is only available in IV form

What if my infection isn't improving?

- More time may be needed for the antibiotic to work
- The bacteria can't be killed by the antibiotic because it is resistant to that antibiotic
- There may be an abscess that needs draining or another treatment needed

