

## What is Antibiotic Resistance?

The genetic makeup of bacteria can mutate due to happenstance. The mutated bacteria then suddenly display new characteristics. The previously effective antibiotic is no longer able to effectively kill the newly mutated bacterial strain. The bacteria has become resistant.

If antibiotics are prescribed often or off-label, a resistant pathogen has free rein to multiply. It can easily overtake all other bacteria, that are still responsive to antibiotics. If someone catches this new resistant pathogen, the previous antibiotic treatment is no longer effective.

The number of resistant bacteria rises yearly. In contrast, the number of new antibiotics brought to market are few and far behind.



### We need your help!

Through responsible use of antibiotics, you can help maintain the effectiveness of these life-saving medications.

The masculine i.e. feminine form is being used to improve legibility. The respective other gender is always also addressed within the context of the text.



### Please Note:

- Antibiotics are only effective against bacteria, not against viruses.
- To ensure that antibiotics will remain effective in future, they must be used properly.
- Antibiotics should be prescribed as often as necessary, but as seldom as possible.

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**DRINKING TEA  
IS SOMETIMES  
THE BETTER  
CHOICE**



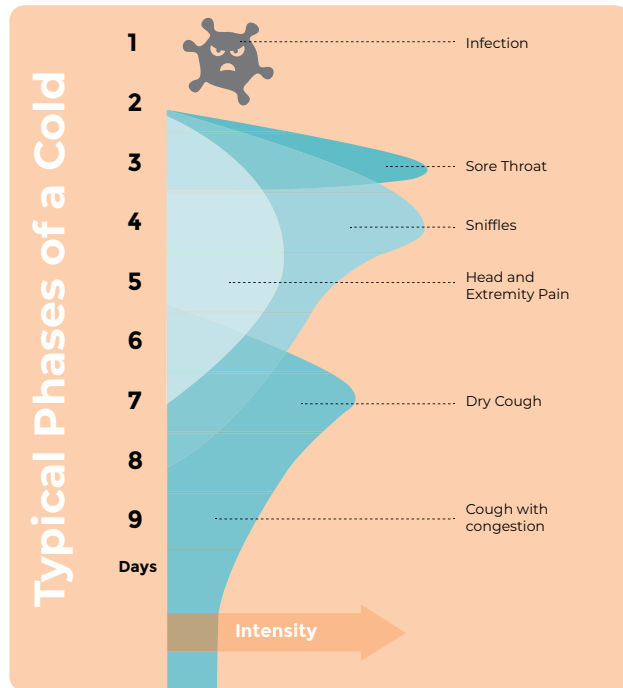
... because antibiotics do not fight **viruses associated with the common cold**. Trust your physician's recommendations.



[www.mags.nrw/antibiotika](http://www.mags.nrw/antibiotika)

## This is what happens when you get a respiratory infection

Your throat is sore. Your nose is running. You have a low-grade fever, feel out-of-sorts and have no energy. No doubt these symptoms are familiar to you; on average adults suffer a cold four times a year, kids are even more susceptible.



Both bacteria and viruses can be the trigger of the common cold. But would it surprise you to know that in nine of ten cases virus strains are the actual cause?

But, only bacteria can be treated with antibiotics. If a cold is due to a viral infection, treatment with antibiotics has no therapeutic affect and will not provide any symptom relief.

## What helps when fighting the common cold?

- **rest and conserving energy**
- **plenty of liquids**
- **nasal sprays**
- **fever reducing and pain reducing medications**

Consult your pharmacist. Should your symptoms last longer than usual, or you have a high fever, contact your physician and trust and follow his recommendations.



### What can you do to prevent catching the common cold?

- Routinely wash your hands thoroughly, especially when you have contact with others who are suffering from the common cold.
- Use single-use tissues and throw them away immediately.
- Sneeze and cough into the inside of you elbow.

Take advantage of the recommended vaccinations and remember to get your booster shots.

## Antibiotics – Friend and Foe

Antibiotics are very effective at fighting bacteria that result in illness. They can kill the bacteria or prevent additional bacteria from multiplying. But antibiotics simultaneously kill other useful bacteria that are important to the healthy functioning of the body. Like e.g. the trillions of bacteria that populate the digestive tract. Trust your physician to make the right decision regarding whether or not antibiotics are indicated.

If your physician prescribes antibiotics, it is important to follow the information sheet and dosage instructions:

- Follow the recommended dosage instructions and times.
- Complete the recommended course of antibiotics as recommended by your physician and do not stop taking antibiotics mid-course.
- Never take antibiotics that were prescribed to a third-party, even if the symptoms are similar.

