

DO I REALLY NEED AN ANTIBIOTIC?

1. Taking antibiotics when you don't have a skin infection **won't stop** you from getting one.
2. **You may not need any antibiotic** for your skin infection - even if you have been diagnosed with MRSA, a "super bug." Sometimes, all you need is a doctor to drain the infection. NEVER OPEN A WOUND yourself because you can cause blood infections!

HOW SHOULD I TAKE AN ANTIBIOTIC?

1. **You need to take the right medicine.** Antibiotics are not all the same.
2. Even if you start to feel better, **you need to take all of the pills**, to help the infection go away. Taking a few pills won't kill all of the bacteria, and may make the ones that remain stronger.
3. You need to take the **right amount of medicine at the right time** of day.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH TAKING ANTIBIOTICS I DON'T NEED?

You may develop resistance to the medicine. This means that if you get an infection, the antibiotic will not kill the bacteria and the infection will not go away.

We normally have bacteria on our skin. A wound happens when a lot of these bacteria get under the skin and grow into an infection.

Antibiotics work by killing the bacteria in skin infections. The **bacteria that are normally on your skin can become resistant to antibiotics** if you take them when you don't really need them.

AVOID ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE

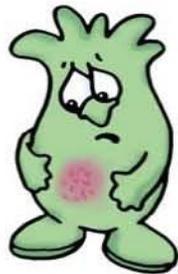


WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE?

1. **See a doctor before** you start taking antibiotics. Skin infections may look like spider bites, blisters or cuts filled with fluid (pus), or painful bumps under the skin (boils).
2. **Don't try to persuade your doctor to give you antibiotics.** They may not be needed!
3. **Don't share your antibiotics** or keep some for "next time." Use them yourself and take them all.
4. **Go back to the doctor** if you are taking your antibiotics and not getting better after two or three days of treatment. You may need a different kind of antibiotic.
5. **Talk to the doctor** if you think the antibiotics are making you feel sick. **There are things you can do to make them easier to take.**
6. **Educate people** you know about antibiotics and antibiotic resistance by sharing this brochure with them.

So what we're trying to say is...

See a Doctor ...
if you think you have
a wound or skin infection.



**Prevent antibiotic
resistance**

**Take antibiotics only
when you need them!**



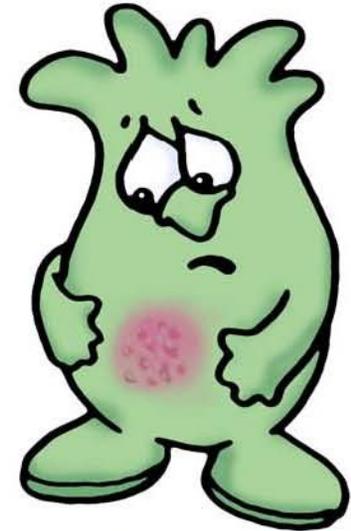
If you are given a
prescription, **FINISH
THE WHOLE BOTTLE***

***The last few pills kill the
toughest germs!**

For more information call:
**Tacoma-Pierce County
Health Department**
253 798-6410
tpchd.org

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ANTIBIOTICS AND SKIN INFECTIONS



**What do you need to
know?**

