

Questions to ask your Healthcare Provider Before Asking for an Antibiotic:

- 1. Could my symptoms be caused by something other than bacteria (e.g., a virus or something that is not an infection)?**
- 2. What signs or symptoms should I look for that could mean I might need an antibiotic?**
- 3. Can I be monitored to see if my symptoms improve with other remedies, without using antibiotics?**

Questions to ask your Healthcare Provider When you are Prescribed an Antibiotic:

- 1. What infection is the antibiotic treating and how do you know I have that infection?**
- 2. What side effects might occur from this antibiotic?**
- 3. Could any of my medications interact with this antibiotic?**
- 4. How will I be monitored to know whether my illness is responding to the antibiotic?**

WESTVIEW HEALTH CARE CENTER'S COMMITMENT TO OUR PATIENTS ABOUT ANTIBIOTICS

Antibiotics only fight infections caused by bacteria. Like all drugs, they can be harmful and should only be used when necessary. Your health is important to us. As your healthcare providers, we want to provide the best possible care for your wellbeing. If an antibiotic is not needed, we will explain this to you and will offer a treatment plan that will help. We are dedicated to prescribing antibiotics only when they are needed, and we will avoid giving you antibiotics when they might do more harm than good.

For additional questions or inquiries concerning antibiotics please contact Westview's Infection Control Coordinator at **(860) 774-8574, ext. 158.**

Westview Health Care Center
150 Ware Road,
Dayville, CT 06241
860-774-8574

Antibiotic Use In Rehabilitation and Long Term Care

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ANTIBIOTICS



WHAT ARE ANTIBIOTICS?

Antibiotics are drugs used to treat infections caused by bacteria. They do not work for illnesses caused by viruses, like flu and most cases of bronchitis.

WHEN ARE ANTIBIOTICS NECESSARY?

There are times when antibiotics are urgently needed; for example, to treat sepsis (when bacteria cause a severe infection of the bloodstream), pneumonia caused by bacteria, and meningitis caused by bacteria. Using antibiotics when they are not necessary increases the risk they will not work when needed most.

CAN TAKING ANTIBIOTICS BE HARMFUL?

Antibiotics, like any medications, can have minor side effects like upset stomach or rashes, or can cause serious allergic reactions and drug interactions. Antibiotic use also put people at risk for a deadly type of bacteria caused by *C.difficile*. Frequent or excessive use of antibiotics leads to developing bacteria that are resistant to those antibiotics. Antibiotic-resistant bacteria are harder to kill, and can cause untreatable infections. A person can carry resistant bacteria without feeling sick (this is called "colonization"), but if bacteria causes an infection, it can require more complex treatments and transfer to the hospital.

WHAT IS ANTIBIOTIC STEWARDSHIP?

Antibiotic stewardship refers to a set of commitments and actions designed to make sure patients receive the right dose, of the right antibiotic, for the right amount of time; and only when truly necessary. Improving antibiotic use will ensure these life-saving medications are effective and available when we need them.

WHY IS IMPROVING ANTIBIOTIC PRESCRIBING PRACTICES IMPORTANT?

Antibiotic resistance is a growing problem, both in the United States and across the world. An important driver of antibiotic resistance is the overuse of antibiotics. When antibiotics are used correctly, you get the best effect on your health, your family's health, and the health of those around you.