

What Is Watchful Waiting?



**BE
ANTIBIOTICS
AWARE**

SMART USE, BEST CARE

WAIT. DO NOT FILL YOUR PRESCRIPTION JUST YET.

Your healthcare professional believes your illness may go away on its own.

You should watch and wait for ____ days/hours before deciding whether to take an antibiotic.

In the meantime, follow your healthcare professional's recommendations to help you feel better and continue to monitor your own symptoms over the next few days.

- Rest.

- Drink extra water and fluids.

- Use a cool mist vaporizer or saline nasal spray to relieve congestion.

- For sore throats in adults and older children, try ice chips, sore throat spray, or lozenges.

- Use honey to relieve cough. Do not give honey to an infant younger than 1.

If you **feel better, no further action is necessary. You don't need antibiotics.**

If you **do not** feel better, experience **new symptoms**, or have **other concerns**, call your healthcare professional _____. **Discuss whether you need a recheck or antibiotics.**

It may not be convenient to visit your healthcare professional multiple times, but it is critical to take antibiotics only when needed. When antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help you and the side effects could still hurt you. Common side effects of antibiotics can include rash, dizziness, nausea, diarrhea, and yeast infections.

Antibiotics save lives, and when a patient needs antibiotics, the benefits outweigh the risks of side effects. You can protect yourself and others by learning when antibiotics are and are not needed.

To learn more about antibiotic prescribing and use, visit www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

