

Ear Infections in Children



Just because your child has ear pain or an ear infection, does NOT mean they need antibiotics. Here is why your doctor MAY NOT prescribe antibiotics for your child:

Not all ear pain is from a bacterial infection. Ear pain may be caused by any of these:

- ➔ Bacteria
- ➔ Viruses
- ➔ A blockage in the ear canal
- ➔ Pressure or fluid in the middle ear
- ➔ Jaw or throat problems

Of these, ONLY bacteria should SOMETIMES be treated with antibiotics.

MORE THAN HALF of ear infections are due to VIRUSES and will not get better AT ALL with antibiotics. These viruses will get better on their own, over time.

You can make your child FEEL better whatever is causing their ear pain.

You CAN:

- ➔ Give acetaminophen (like Tylenol) or ibuprofen (like Advil and Motrin) for ear pain, headache, or fever *as directed by your doctor*. Do NOT give your child aspirin.
- ➔ Raise your child's head up when they are sleeping to help ease the pain. If your child is older than 2 years, make sure they have plenty of pillows under their head.
- ➔ Keep your child away from cigarette smoke.


If your doctor does prescribe an antibiotic:

- ➔ Give ALL of the antibiotic AS DIRECTED, even if your child feels better before they've finished their antibiotic!
- ➔ STOP the antibiotic and CALL your doctor if a rash develops.
- ➔ NEVER give your child leftover antibiotics. (Theirs or anyone else's)

Talk to your doctor about taking the right drug for the right bug!

And remember to give lots of hugs!

Visit our website at: www.aware.md

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