

## 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

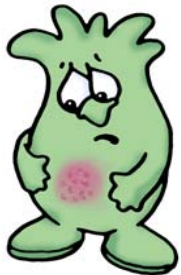


## WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE?

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.



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

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

**Prevent antibiotic  
resistance**

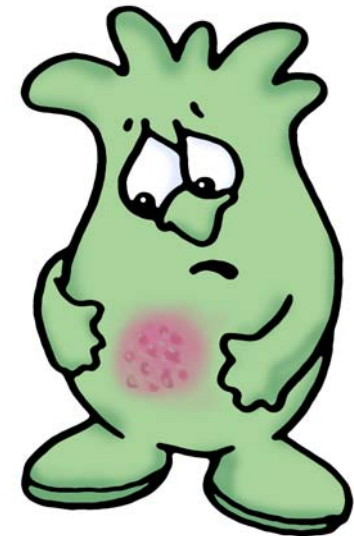
**Take antibiotics only  
when you need them!**



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?**

