



TARGET

Keep Antibiotics Working

Top Tips for Discussing Antibiotics

Asking specific questions and providing information will help address patient's concerns and maintain patient satisfaction if you decide not to prescribe an antibiotic.

C oncerns

Ask specifically about patient's concerns

"What things are you most worried about?"

H istory

Discuss history & exam

While doing an examination provide "no problem" commentary:
Your heartrate is normal, your temperature isn't raised.

E xpectations

Ask specifically about patient expectations

"How do you think I could most help you today?"
"How do you feel about antibiotics?"

S ymptoms

Provide explanation for symptoms

"Phlegm is a normal reaction to inflammation in the airways."
"Phlegm catches particles in your airways and keeps your lungs clear."

T imeline

Be specific about illness timeline / usual course

"A typical cough can take 3-4 weeks to clear completely."

S hortcomings

Explain shortcomings of antibiotics

"On average antibiotics may help reduce cough by only 1 day in an illness lasting 3-4 weeks. Antibiotics don't help with the pain but have side effects e.g., diarrhoea, nausea and rashes."

S elf-care

Advise patients how to self-care

Provide patients with specific information on red-flag symptoms and when they should seek further help

S afety-netting

Provide safety-netting advice

"Make sure you are drinking enough, the immune system needs fluids to function properly."
"You can take paracetamol, and or ibuprofen, which will help the pain and soothe the inflammation."

Typical duration of common infections

Sore throat: 7-8 days | Sinusitis: 14-21 days Cough: 21 days | Otitis media: 8 days Common cold: 14 days (could vary depending on patient history and comorbidities). Provide info on red-flag symptoms and when to seek further help.