



ADVICE AND FACTS ABOUT ANTIBIOTICS AND INFECTIONS

Does your child have an acute ear infection?

Ear infections in children are very common and generally harmless. They are usually caused by bacteria. These infections will, in most cases, heal without antibiotic treatment. When antibiotics are required, the first hand choice is usually penicillin. A child may need a pain reliever for a day or so, whether or not the child is given antibiotics.

Treatment

Antibiotics are not recommended for children age 1–12 years with an uncomplicated ear infection.

If your child is younger than 1 year or older than 12 years and has been diagnosed with an ear infection, your doctor will prescribe penicillin.

Ear infections that are double sided (that is, an infection in both ears) in children younger than 2 years and all ear infections where the eardrum has ruptured, are treated with penicillin. Your doctor might write a prescription that you can fill if your child doesn't improve in a day or two. It is important for you to be on the lookout for any signs that the infection is getting worse or not healing properly, regardless of whether your child receives antibiotics or not.

Contact your doctor again if:

- Swelling or redness develops behind your child's ear, or if the ear starts to protrude.
- Your child develops a high fever, additional pain or is unusually unwell.
- Your child experiences discharge from the ear (if this occurs, it may be time to fill the prescription that your doctor may have written). The same instructions apply if the earache or fever has not gone away within two to three days.

Paracetamol or another pain killer can be given to the child as needed. If the child is older than six months, ibuprofen can also be given. The child should be free of symptoms and fever for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

Follow-up

A follow-up doctor's visit is not necessary if your child's ear infection was contained to one ear and the other ear remained healthy, regardless of whether your child received antibiotics or not.

If your child is younger than 4 years, your doctor should do a check-up after three months if the infection was in both ears or if there was fluid behind the eardrum.

The recommendation for older children and adults with double sided ear infections is a check-up after three months only if they are still experiencing reduced hearing ability. Keep in mind that temporary hearing loss is common a couple of weeks after an ear infection.

Contact your doctor for a check-up if other symptoms appear, such as pain, discharge from either ear, balance problems or a strong feeling of congestion or pressure in the ears.

Always see a doctor if you suspect that your child is hearing poorly, whether or not you have noticed any infection.

Fill in at the clinic and check the appropriate alternatives:

The child has an ear infection today

- in the left ear
- in the right ear
- the other ear is healthy
- there is fluid in the other ear
- A check-up is not needed if there are no problems
- A check-up is recommended in 3 months

THE CHILD HAS SEEN DOCTOR (NAME OF DOCTOR)

TODAY'S DATE

CONTACT/MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH

PHONE NUMBER