



Viruses or bacteria

What caused your infection?

Infection	Most people get better by	Common cause			Are antibiotics recommended?
		Virus	Virus or bacteria	Bacteria	
COVID -19	1-3 weeks	✓			NO
Common cold	1-2 weeks	✓			NO
Flu	2-3 weeks	✓			NO
Laryngitis	1 week	✓			NO
Tonsillitis / Pharyngitis	1 week	✓			NO
Acute bronchitis	3 weeks	✓			NO
Sinusitis	2 weeks		✓		SOMETIMES
Sore throat	1 week		✓		SOMETIMES
Ear infection	1 week		✓		SOMETIMES
Exacerbation of COPD	1-2 weeks		✓		SOMETIMES
Pneumonia	1-2 weeks			✓	YES
Urinary tract infection	2-3 days			✓	YES



Antibiotics are only needed to treat certain infections caused by bacteria. Viral infections should not be treated with antibiotics. Use of antibiotics can lead to antimicrobial resistance. This means that antibiotics become ineffective and infections become increasingly difficult to treat.

