

Patient name

It is recommended that you self-care

Your infection	Most are better by	How to look after yourself and your family	When to get help
Middle-ear infection	8 days	- Have plenty of rest. - Drink enough fluids to avoid feeling thirsty. - Ask your local pharmacist to recommend medicines to help your symptoms or pain (or both). - Fever is a sign the body is fighting the infection and usually gets better by itself in most cases. You can use paracetamol if you or your child are uncomfortable as a result of a fever. - Use a tissue and wash your hands well to help prevent spread of your infection to your family, friends and others you meet. - Other things you can do suggested by GP or nurse:	The following are possible signs of serious illness and should be assessed urgently: - If your skin is very cold or has a strange colour, or you develop an unusual rash. - If you feel confused or have slurred speech or are very drowsy. - If you have difficulty breathing. Signs that suggest breathing problems can include: - breathing quickly - turning blue around the lips and the skin below the mouth - skin between or above the ribs getting sucked or pulled in with every breath. - If you develop a severe headache and are sick. - If you develop chest pain. - If you have difficulty swallowing or are drooling. - If you cough up blood. - If you are feeling a lot worse. If you or your child has any of these symptoms, are getting worse or are sicker than you would expect (even if your/their temperature falls), trust your instincts and seek medical advice urgently from NHS 111 or your GP. If a child under the age of 5 has any of symptoms 1–3 go to A&E immediately or call 999. Less serious signs that can usually wait until the next available appointment: - If you are not starting to improve a little by the time given in the 'Most are better by' column. - In children with middle-ear infection: if fluid is coming out of their ears or if they have new deafness. - Mild side effects such as diarrhoea, however seek medical attention if you're concerned. - Other
Sore throat	7-8 days		
Sinusitis	14-21 days		
Common cold	14 days		
Cough or bronchitis	21 days		
Other infection:	 days		

Back-up antibiotic prescription to be collected after days only if you are not starting to feel a little better or you feel worse.

Collect from: ☐ Pharmacy ☐ General practice reception ☐ GP, nurse, other

- Colds, most coughs, sinusitis, ear infections, sore throats, and other infections often get better without antibiotics, as your body can usually fight these infections on its own.
- Taking antibiotics encourages bacteria that live inside you to become resistant. That means that antibiotics may not work when you really need them.
- Antibiotics can cause side effects such as rashes, thrush, stomach pains, diarrhoea, reactions to sunlight, other symptoms, or being sick if you drink alcohol with metronidazole.
- Find out more about how you can make better use of antibiotics and help keep this vital treatment effective by visiting www.nhs.uk/keepantibioticsworking

Never share antibiotics and always return any unused antibiotics to a pharmacy for safe disposal.

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