

HOW DO I GET RELIEF FROM MY SORE THROAT?

Sore throat is very common and, although it's painful and uncomfortable, it's usually nothing to worry about. Most sore throats get better on their own within a week. This leaflet explains what causes sore throat and describes how to treat the painful symptoms for rapid relief, to enable you to get back to normal as quickly as possible

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WHAT CAUSES A SORE THROAT?

- Up to 8 out of 10 sore throats are caused by viruses, such as those that cause colds or flu
- The pain and discomfort of a sore throat, whether it is viral or bacterial, is due to inflammation of the throat tissues as your body fights the infection

HOW LONG DOES A SORE THROAT LAST?

- Sore throats generally get better on their own within 1 week but are usually at their worst during the first 4 days

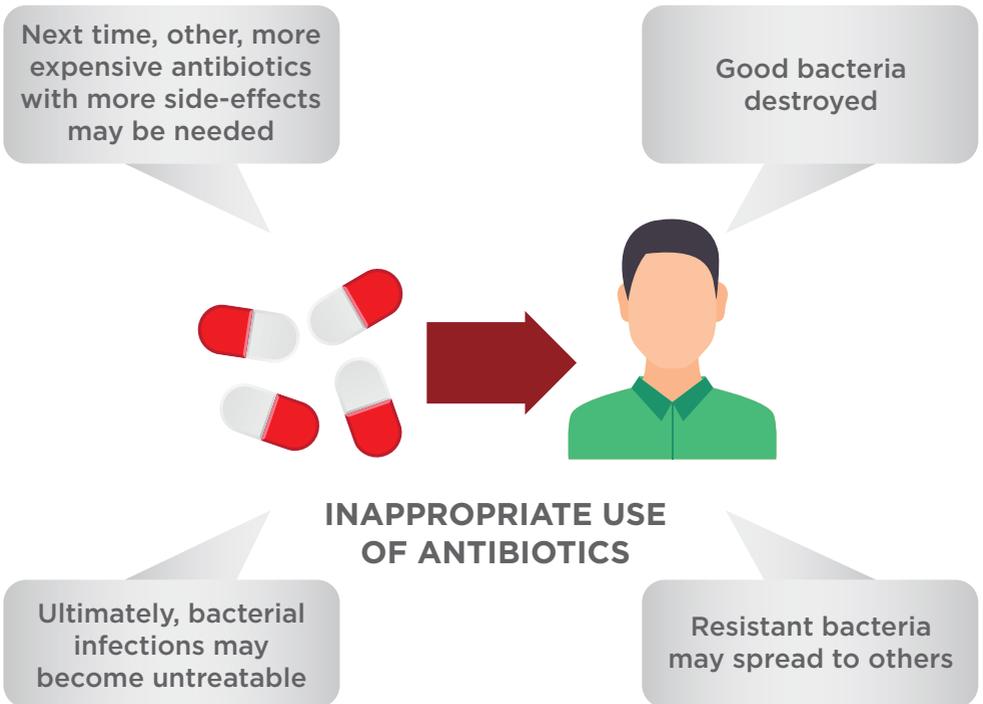
ANTIBIOTICS ARE NOT RECOMMENDED FOR MOST SORE THROATS

- ✗ Antibiotics do not work against viruses, which cause up to 8 out of 10 sore throats
- ✗ Antibiotics don't have any direct pain-relieving effects, so your sore throat will remain painful with or without antibiotics
- ✗ Antibiotics can cause side effects like diarrhoea and disrupt the good bacteria in your gut (microbiome) that are important for your health and immune system
- ✓ Sore throat can be treated with symptomatic relief products



DON'T HELP BACTERIA BECOME RESISTANT **- ONLY TAKE ANTIBIOTICS IF YOU NEED TO**

- ! When you take antibiotics, bacteria in your body can become resistant to the antibiotic
- ! These antibiotic-resistant bacteria can stay in your body for up to 1 year afterwards
- ! The resistant bacteria can be spread to family and friends. Effective handwashing can reduce the spread of bacteria
- ! Antibiotic-resistant bacteria are harder or even impossible to treat



ASK YOUR PHARMACIST ABOUT THE RIGHT RELIEF FOR YOUR SORE THROAT

- Your pharmacy has treatments that can rapidly relieve the pain and inflammation of a sore throat
- They can also advise if you need to see a doctor

RELIEF IS AS EASY AS 1,2,3



ASSESS YOUR SYMPTOMS

- Help your pharmacist by providing a full description of your symptoms and any concerns that you have
- Describe which symptoms are bothering you most, and how long you have had them



BEAT YOUR SYMPTOMS

- Your pharmacist will tell you if they think you should see your doctor
- Ask your pharmacist to recommend the best treatment for your symptoms
- Choose a treatment to meet your needs: there are throat lozenges and sprays that contain ingredients to relieve your sore throat - for example, with pain-relieving and anti-inflammatory effects



CARE FOR YOURSELF

- Don't forget to stay hydrated and rest
- Remember: antibiotics won't stop the symptoms of a viral infection
- Monitor your symptoms and discuss with your pharmacist if needed

SEE YOUR DOCTOR IF YOUR SORE THROAT DOESN'T IMPROVE OR GETS WORSE

- If your symptoms do not improve after 1 week, or if they get worse or you develop new symptoms (such as fever), contact your doctor for more advice
- If your doctor decides you need an antibiotic, take them as prescribed
- You will still need treatment to relieve your painful sore throat symptoms, which antibiotics won't relieve

PRODUCTS THAT PROVIDE EFFECTIVE, RAPID SYMPTOMATIC TREATMENT FOR THE PAIN AND INFLAMMATION OF SORE THROAT

Formulation	Action and Effect					Notes
	Local delivery to throat	Relieves pain	Coats and moistens the throat	Anti-inflammatory action	Low dose with low risk of side effects	
 <p>Anti-inflammatory lozenge or spray (e.g. flurbiprofen)</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Local anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving action in the throat
 <p>Antiseptic/anaesthetic lozenge (e.g. amylnmetacresol, 2,4-dichlorobenzyl alcohol, hexylresorcinol, lidocaine)</p>	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	Lozenge dissolves slowly to release active ingredients for pain relief
 <p>Oral anti-inflammatory tablet (e.g. ibuprofen)</p>	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	Anti-inflammatory action throughout the body. Slower acting than local treatments
 <p>Oral analgesic tablet (e.g. paracetamol)</p>	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	Only low level anti-inflammatory activity



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The Global Respiratory Infection Partnership (GRIP) is an international group of healthcare professionals committed to reducing inappropriate antibiotic use for respiratory tract infections in primary care and the wider community, helping to counteract antibiotic resistance.