

## About The Children's Hospital

Consistently ranked one of the best children's hospitals in America by *U.S. News & World Report* and other publications, The Children's Hospital is 100 percent dedicated to kids and their families. From infants to young adults and from the simplest to the most complex, Children's combines the very best in pediatric medicine with a uniquely kid-friendly environment. Children's has 1,071 pediatric specialists in more than 47 medical and surgical subspecialties, offering 145 clinics and programs for every healthcare need. Children's also provides care at 12 neighborhood care centers across the Front Range and more than 400 outreach clinics throughout Colorado, Wyoming and Montana. From medical breakthroughs to late-night fevers, Children's provides complete pediatric care.

For more information, visit the Web site at [www.thechildrenshospital.org](http://www.thechildrenshospital.org).

## About Get Smart Colorado



Get Smart Colorado is a coalition dedicated to minimizing the problem of antibiotic-resistant bacteria in Colorado by providing education about and support for the appropriate use of antibiotics through collaborative efforts of professional, academic, community, government, and labor and industry partners. Get Smart Colorado is funded through grants from The Colorado Health Foundation and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It is currently located at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

For more information, visit the Web site at [www.getsmartcolorado.com](http://www.getsmartcolorado.com)



# Some Bugs Don't Need Drugs!

*When your child is sick, you want to do everything you can to help. But antibiotics are not the answer for every illness. This brochure will help you know when antibiotics work — and when they won't.*



**The Children's Hospital**

# Some Bugs Don't Need Drugs!

**Antibiotics** are very strong medicines and should be used to treat illness or infection caused by bacteria.

**Bacteria** cause strep throat, some pneumonia and sinus infections.  
*Antibiotics can work for these illnesses.*

**Viruses** cause the common cold, runny noses, most coughs and the flu. Children fight off these viral illnesses on their own.  
*Antibiotics don't work for these illnesses.*

## These are signs and symptoms of a viral infection:

- sore throat
- congestion
- runny nose
- poor appetite
- fever
- fussiness that can be soothed by holding, rocking or a pacifier
- cough

## Using antibiotics for a virus will NOT do the following:

- cure the infection
- make your child feel better
- help your child get back to school or childcare faster
- keep others from catching it

## Use these treatments for a viral infection:

- a humidifier by your child's bed
- lots of fluids to avoid dehydration
- clearing of the nose with suction or blowing
- acetaminophen or ibuprofen

## Call your doctor in these situations:

- symptoms do not improve in 5-7 days
- fever persists for more than 2-3 days

## Commonly asked questions

### How do I know if my child has a viral or bacterial infection?

Ask your child's doctor or healthcare provider and follow his or her advice on what to do about your child's illness.

### What's the harm in giving my child antibiotics anytime?

Taking antibiotics when they are not needed can cause some bacteria to become resistant to the antibiotic. These resistant bacteria are stronger and harder to kill. They can stay in your child's body and cause severe illness that can't be cured with antibiotics.

Your child's doctor or healthcare provider will prescribe antibiotics if your child has a bacterial infection.

*Information in this brochure should not be considered medical advice, which can be given to you only by your own healthcare provider.*