

# TOO LONG, TOO SHORT, OR JUST RIGHT?

## Find the "Just Right" Antibiotic Duration

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Over time, the number of days of antibiotics prescribed to treat common infections has shortened (10 days... 7 days... 5 days). As parents and prescribers, how do we know what's right?

### Recommended durations aren't always based on strong evidence

- Many early studies examining antibiotic treatment for common infections arbitrarily selected the number of days of antibiotics prescribed
- Over time, these practices have become "standard of care" based on good outcomes and lack of future studies looking at shorter durations

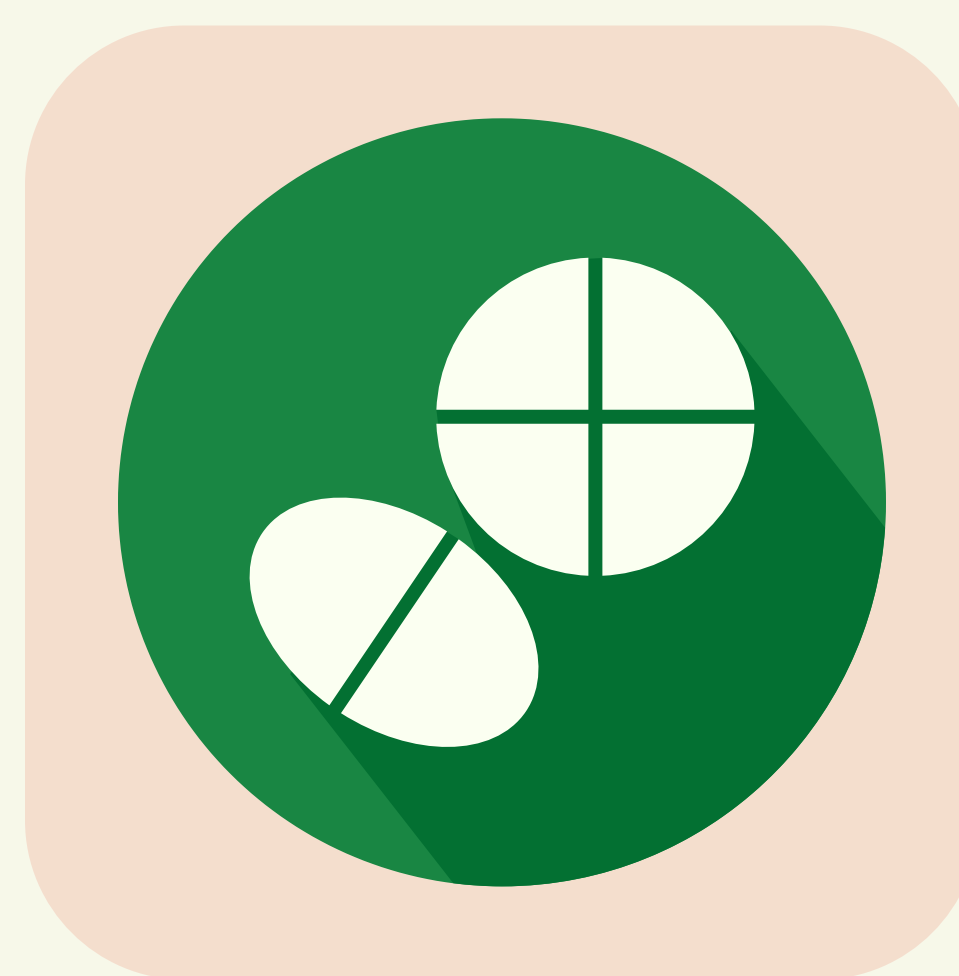
### Longer durations do not always work better

- Historically, people thought longer antibiotic courses reduced bacterial resistance or the chance of the infection coming back, but this hasn't been proven true

 **Taking antibiotics for longer than needed actually promotes the development of antibiotic resistance.**

### Long durations of antibiotics can be harmful

While antibiotics are usually well-tolerated, there is evidence that short courses are associated with less side effects and are just as effective as long courses.



**7% INCREASE**  
 in risk of developing an antibiotic-related side effect with each additional day of antibiotics in children



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## WHAT INFECTIONS CAN BE TREATED SHORTER?

- Many skin infections can be treated for 5 days
- Community-acquired pneumonia can be treated for 5 days
- Most simple UTIs are effectively treated with 3-7 days
- More information can be found [here](#)



## LONGER COURSES MAY BE NEEDED FOR

- Severe or complicated infections
- Infections in difficult to treat locations (ex. bone)
- Patients whose immune systems do not function normally



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