

# Prescribing an antibiotic?

## Tidbits to Teach Families

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Antibiotic stewardship has greatly focused on situations where **not** to prescribe antibiotics, but what is important to discuss with families who **are** prescribed antibiotics to avoid possible harm?



### 01

#### How should you give your child this antibiotic?

- Review antibiotic instructions with families as these can be confusing
- Consider **identifying specific times** to give the antibiotic (e.g., after school) to improve adherence
- Review circumstances where antibiotics should **not be given with certain foods or other medications** (e.g., iron and fluoroquinolones)



### 02

#### Why is your child receiving this antibiotic instead of another?

- Explain the reason behind specific antibiotic choices and educate that we **target the most likely bacteria**
- For example, a Z-Pak given daily for 5 days may be convenient for families but may not be effective for an ear infection
- Educate that unnecessary use of a broad-spectrum antibiotic **promotes resistance**



### 03

#### How long should your child take this antibiotic?

- Collaborate with families to identify short, yet effective durations
- Educate on the importance of **finishing all doses** even if improved
- Encourage families to appropriately dispose of and **not to keep excess antibiotic** doses. Click [here](#) for more info



### 04

#### If your child refuses the antibiotic, what should you do?

- Reduce stress for families by providing resources to assist with antibiotic administration to children
- Encourage families to **call if their child absolutely won't take an antibiotic** as alternatives may be available
- Review [this handout](#) created by Child Life for suggestions



### 05

#### What side effects should you look out for?

- Council families on both mild and severe adverse effects
- Explain to families the **differences between side effects** (e.g., stomach upset) and **allergies** (e.g., hives)
- Provide specific guidance on **when to contact providers** regarding an adverse effect



Click [here](#) to take a short quiz.



Author, **Annie Wirtz**, PharmD, BCPPS is Co-Director of the Antimicrobial Stewardship Program. Click [here](#) to read her article in The p Link about this topic.

Check out the **NEW ASP Website** [here](#)!  
This will be updated regularly with resources and content.