Wash Your Hands!

Handwashing is the best way to stop the spread of infections

- Use plain soap and water
- No need for antibacterial soap!
- If soap and water are not available AND if your hands are not dirty or greasy, you can use an alcohol-based hand rub to sanitize your hands. Wash hands with plain soap and water as soon as you can.

When to wash your hands

- Before eating or preparing food
- After using the toilet
- Before and after changing diapers
- After blowing nose
- After handling shared objects
- Before handling contact lenses
- Before flossing your teeth

You can make a difference!

- Expect doctors, dentists, nurses and therapists to wash their hands before they examine you or your children.
- Make sure plain soap is available in your child’s school, in your workplace and places where you eat.
- Teach by example

Not All Bugs Are Created Equal

Both viruses and bacteria cause infections, but antibiotics only work against bacteria

Viral Infections

- Colds, flu, croup, laryngitis, chest colds (bronchitis) and most sore throats are caused by viruses.
- Are more contagious than bacterial infections
  If more than one person in the family has the same illness, it is most likely a viral infection
- Can make you just as sick as bacterial infections
- Usually get better in 4-5 days but it may take as long as three weeks to fully recover

Antibiotics do not work against viruses

Bacterial Infections

- Are less common than viral infections
- Do not spread as easily from one person to another as viral infections
- Cause infections such as pneumonia and strep throat

Antibiotics do work against most bacteria

Antibiotic Resistance Is a Problem

What is Antibiotic Resistance?

- Using antibiotics when you don’t need them (for example, colds and flu) can lead to antibiotic resistance
- Bacteria have “antibiotic resistance” when they cannot be killed by antibiotics
- Remember it is the bacteria that are resistant - NOT YOU!

Even very healthy people, who have never taken antibiotics, can become infected with antibiotic resistant bacteria from others

Use Antibiotics Wisely

You can make a difference

- Do not expect an antibiotic. Most respiratory infections are due to viruses
  Trust your doctor if an antibiotic has not been prescribed.
- Wash your hands to prevent the spread of infections.