

Words From a Survivor

“ I am a C. diff survivor... fighting a C. diff infection can be exhausting on so many levels...it is a physically, mentally and financially debilitating infection...we need to get smart about taking antibiotics only when really needed.”

Nancy Caralle
C. difficile survivor

Read Nancy's full story at <https://blogs.cdc.gov/safehealthcare/c-diff-survivor-and-advocate-shares-her-story-2/>

Improving the way we use antibiotics for residents is one way we can protect your family member's health and ensure the safety of his or her care!

Resources for You

- <https://www.cdc.gov/longtermcare/pdfs/factsheet-core-elements-10-infection-prevention-questions.pdf>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/longtermcare/pdfs/factsheet-core-elements-what-to-ask.pdf>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/longtermcare/pdfs/factsheet-core-elements-what-you-need-to-know.pdf>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/longtermcare/pdfs/Infographic-Antibiotic-Stewardship-Nursing-Homes.pdf>

Material adapted from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's "Nursing Home Antimicrobial Stewardship Guide"

References

1. Lim CJ, Kong DCM, Stuart RL. Reducing inappropriate antibiotic prescribing in the residential care setting: current perspectives. *Clin Interv Aging*. 2014; 9: 165-177.
2. Nicolle LE, Bentley D, Garibaldi R, et al. Antimicrobial use in long-term care facilities. *Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol* 2000; 21:537-45.

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Suspect a Urinary Tract Infection?

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR SENIORS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Learn about when it is appropriate to treat with antibiotics.

EASIL  **BE ANTIBIOTICS AWARE**
SMART USE. BEST CARE.
Emory Antibiotic Stewardship Improving Long Term Care

What are Antibiotics?

Antibiotics are drugs used to treat infections caused by bacteria. They do not work for illnesses caused by viruses such as the flu or bronchitis.

What are Urinary Tract Infections?

- A Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) is an infection involving any part of the urinary system.
- Antibiotics do not help when there are no UTI symptoms (like fever) even when bacteria may be in the urine.



We Use “Best Practice Criteria” to Minimize Harm to Our Residents

- To avoid unnecessary harm by antibiotics, we strive to start antibiotics and obtain urine tests when a resident meets **ONE** of these criteria:
 - » Painful urination
 - OR**
 - » Fever or warning sign (rapid heart rate, low blood pressure) **AND** at least one urine infection symptom*
 - OR**
 - » Two or more urine infection symptoms* without fever or warning sign
- * Urine infection symptoms include new urinary incontinence, back/stomach pain, and increased urine frequency or feeling the need to urinate.
- Residents with dementia unable to report symptoms and those with catheters in their bladder have slightly different criteria (talk to your healthcare provider)

What are the Risks or Harms of Antibiotics?

Although we cannot be certain that these harms will occur, it's important to discuss the potential harms associated with taking antibiotics.

There are five potential health problems that occur as a result of taking an antibiotic:

1. Allergic reactions (rash, swelling)
2. Side effects such as upset stomach
3. May interact with other medications (blood pressure)
4. *C. difficile* (*C. diff*) diarrheal infection
5. Antibiotic resistance

Watchful Waiting

If our best practice criteria are not met, we will actively monitor our residents for fever or other symptoms while resident drinks extra water. Watchful waiting is still caring for and treating your family member.

Up to 75% of antibiotics are prescribed incorrectly.^{1,2}

What Can You Do to Make Sure Your Family Member Gets the Best Care?

Talk with your family member and his or her doctor about the risks and benefits of taking antibiotics.

Ask questions! Some good questions to ask a healthcare provider before asking for an antibiotic:

1. Could the symptoms be caused by something other than a bacteria?
2. What signs or symptoms should we look out for that mean antibiotics should be used?
3. What side effects might occur from antibiotics?