

Managing Your Symptoms

| Your Infection | Usually Lasts | How to treat yourself better for these infections, now and next time | When should you get help: Contact your GP Practice or contact NHS 111 (England) |
|----------------------|---------------|---|--|
| Middle-ear infection | 4 days | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have plenty of rest. | <p>1. to 8. are possible signs of serious illness and should be assessed urgently. Phone for advice if you are not sure how urgent the symptoms are.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you develop a severe headache and are sick. 2. If your skin is very cold or has a strange colour, or you develop an unusual rash. 3. If you feel confused or have slurred speech or are very drowsy. 4. If you have difficulty breathing. Signs can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breathing quickly • Turning blue around the lips and the skin below the mouth • Skin between or above the ribs getting sucked or pulled in with every breath 5. If you develop chest pain. 6. If you have difficulty swallowing or are drooling. 7. If you cough up blood. 8. If you are feeling a lot worse. <p>Less serious signs that can usually wait longer and be assessed by our Minor Illness Nurse:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. If you are not improving by the time given in the “Usually Lasts” column. 10. In children with middle-ear infection: if fluid is coming out of their ears or if they have new deafness. |
| Sore throat | 7 days | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink enough fluids to avoid feeling thirsty. • Ask your local pharmacist to recommend medicines to help your symptoms or pain (or both). | |
| Common cold | 10 days | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever is a sign the body is fighting the infection and usually gets better by itself in most cases. You can use paracetamol (or ibuprofen) if you or your child are uncomfortable as a result of a fever. | |
| Sinusitis | 18 days | | |
| Cough or bronchitis | 21 days | | |

- Colds, most coughs, sinusitis, ear infections, sore throats, and other infections often get better without antibiotics, as your body can usually fight these infections on its own.
- The more we use antibiotics, the greater the chance that bacteria will become resistant to them so that they no longer work on our infections.
- Antibiotics can cause side effects such as rashes, thrust, stomach pains, diarrhoea, reactions to sunlight, other symptoms, or being sick if you drink alcohol with metronidazole.