

# ANTIBIOTIC PRESCRIBING

Single  
Point  
Lesson

Antibiotics are important medicines used to treat infections caused by bacteria. When someone has a serious infection, antibiotic treatment can be life saving. Common illnesses such as coughs, colds and sore throats usually get better without antibiotics.

## When antibiotics are used

Antibiotics may be used to treat bacterial infections that: are unlikely to clear up without antibiotics, could infect others unless treated, could take too long to clear without treatment and carry a risk of more serious complications. People at a high risk of infection may also be given antibiotics as a precaution, known as antibiotic prophylaxis

## How can antibiotics be used safely and effectively with older people?

Before a doctor or nurse prescribes an antibiotic they should usually see the resident. They will decide if specimens need taking and will use the local antibiotic prescribing guidelines to ensure the correct antibiotics are used at the correct dose.

Care should be taken with antibiotics as bacteria can become resistant. Only use antibiotics when appropriate to do so.

## Taking of specimens

To ensure the correct antibiotic is being used a sample should be taken if possible e.g. urine, sputum, wound swab. This should be tested in the pathology lab for culture and sensitivity. The lab report will show which antibiotics are sensitive to the infection and which are resistant. Remember to chase up the result if needed.

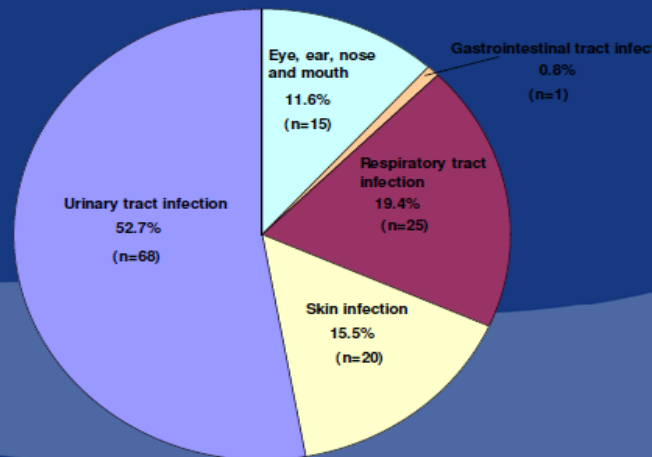


## Taking of antibiotics

Ensure the antibiotics are taken at the correct times. Ensure the full course of antibiotics is completed.

## Most common infections in care homes

Percentage of each HAI Type in care homes within Scotland, 2010



## How should older people be monitored while on antibiotic treatment?

- Check for signs to see if symptoms are improving.
- Temperature returned to normal
  - Increased energy
  - Becoming less confused
  - Being more alert
  - Increased appetite.
  - Improvement in symptoms.
  - If no improvement in symptoms contact the GP.

The infection control team can be contacted if you require any additional advice/support on 01744 457 314