



# Advice sheet: Self-start antibiotics for recurrent urine infections

Your GP has given you this information because you have recurrent urine infections and have opted to have antibiotics at home to start when you have symptoms of a urine infection. Please note a helpful leaflet titled 'Recurrent Cystitis in Women' is available at: [www.patient.info](http://www.patient.info)

## Taking antibiotics

You are responsible for using antibiotics wisely. Bacteria are becoming increasingly resistant to antibiotics, so please ensure they are taken only when absolutely needed. It is very important that when taking antibiotics you **complete** the full course, otherwise the infection can easily become resistant and the antibiotics will not work the next time.

Only use the antibiotics if the infection has not resolved using simple measures. Your immune system will resolve most infections with plenty of fluids and regular painkillers. Remember that antibiotics can have side effects.

The following offers helpful guidance if you start to have your usual symptoms of infection:

- Drink plenty of water, and take painkillers such as ibuprofen. It is essential to take the painkiller **regularly** i.e. ibuprofen three times a day and paracetamol four times daily. This may be enough to settle the infection. Do this for two days.
- If the symptoms are not settling, or if they are very severe, take a sample for analysis then start taking your antibiotics. At the same time, contact your GP surgery to order a replacement prescription and please ensure you inform your GP that you have started your antibiotics. Always submit a urine sample for culture **before** starting the antibiotic.
- Label your sample with your name, date of birth and the date, mark 'FOR CULTURE' and take it to your GP surgery to ensure your sample is tested. Please note that unlabelled samples will be discarded.
- If you still have symptoms after you have finished your antibiotics, contact your GP surgery and ask to discuss your urine test results with a nurse or GP. This will normally be a telephone consultation on the same day.

## We are listening – how did we do?

We welcome your feedback, as it helps us evaluate the services we provide. If you would like to tell us about your experience:

- speak to a member of staff
- visit our website: [www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/feedback](http://www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/feedback) or share your story at: [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk) or 0800 122 31 35
- Tel. 01851 704704 (ext 2408) on a Tuesday and Friday afternoon between 1pm and 4pm.