



## Antibiotics can

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1. **Kill bacteria:**  
Some antibiotics work by killing bacteria
2. **Stop bacteria growing:**  
Some antibiotics work by stopping the bacteria from growing and reproducing
3. **Help pneumonia get better:**  
Pneumonia is often caused by a bacterial infection and is therefore treated with antibiotics
4. **Kills many of our natural bacteria in the body:**  
Antibiotics not only kill the harmful bacteria that make you unwell, antibiotics also kill the natural bacteria (commensal) that help keep you healthy
5. **Help patients who have bacterial infections after operations get better:**  
A person can easily catch a bacterial infection after they have had an operation if they have stitches or an open wound. Antibiotics are important to treat any infections so they can recover more quickly
6. **Encourage our natural bacteria to become resistant to antibiotics:**  
The bacteria in our bodies can become resistant to antibiotics through natural selection.

1. **Treat only symptoms:**  
Antibiotics only indirectly affect symptoms by killing bacteria. Symptoms are better treated with over the counter medicines like paracetamol
2. **Help colds get better more quickly:**  
Colds are caused by viruses and are therefore not affected by antibiotics
3. **Kill viruses:**  
Viruses are not affected by antibiotics
4. **Help hay fever get better more quickly:**  
Hay fever is an allergic reaction and is not caused by bacteria, therefore hay fever will not be helped by antibiotics
5. **Help coughs get better more quickly:**  
Most coughs are caused by viruses and are therefore not helped by antibiotics
6. **Help sore throats get better more quickly:**  
Most sore throats are caused by viruses and are therefore not helped by antibiotics
7. **Help ear ache get better more quickly:**  
Most ear infections are caused by viruses and are therefore not helped by antibiotics
8. **Help asthma get better more quickly:**  
Asthma is caused by inflammation of the lungs and is not caused by bacteria, therefore asthma will not be helped by antibiotics