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## SEVEN HABITS FOR EFFECTIVE USE OF ANTIBIOTICS

- Get all appropriate vaccinations and keep them up to date. Infants, for example, should get the HIB vaccine to prevent meningitis and other serious bacterial infections common in childhood.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist whether an antibiotic is needed for ear and sinus infections. Not all of these infections respond to antibiotics.
- If you are entering the hospital, be sure to inform your health care team if you or someone in your family has recently had a bacterial infection, such as strep or staph, and whether you or your family member have been taking an antibiotic for it.
- Always have a persistent or severe sore throat checked out by a physician. Strep throat must be treated with antibiotics to avoid severe complications.
- If antibiotics are prescribed, be sure you understand why they are being prescribed, the appropriate dose and timing of each dose, and how long you need to take the medication. Your pharmacist can answer any questions you may have.
- Always take **all** the antibiotic medication prescribed. If you stop taking the medicine after a few days, there is a greater likelihood that any resistant bacteria will survive.
- If you or someone you are caring for is particularly susceptible to antibiotic-resistant bacteria — premature infants, children, the elderly, or someone with a compromised immune system (such as people with leukemia or those infected with HIV) — always have your physician check out any symptom that lasts more than 24 hours.

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The Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin (PSW) is a 1,800 member professional association that represents pharmacy practitioners in all aspects of pharmacy, including hospitals, chain pharmacies, independent pharmacies, long-term care facilities, home care and other components of health care. PSW provides leadership in education, advocacy and innovative services which optimize patient care through the utilization and support of rational drug therapy as a primary resource in a changing health care environment.



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