When Antibiotics Stop Working

World Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week
November 18-24, 2026

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) happens when microorganisms, including bacteria, change over time and no longer respond to the medications designed to treat them. This makes infections harder to treat and increases the risk of complications, especially for residents in LTC and RHs.

Antibiotics are important tools, but the more they are used when they aren't needed, the greater the opportunity for antibiotic resistant bacteria to develop and spread.

Give me a **U**

Give me a **T**

Give me a **I**

What's that Stand For?

URINARY TRACT INFECTION

Say **"NO!"** to unnecessary antibiotics

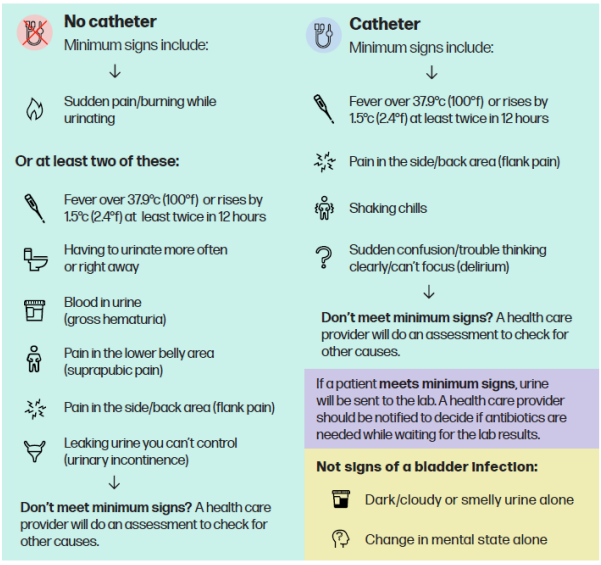
UTI's are a common concern in LTC and RHs. When a resident develops a suspected UTI, antibiotics *MAY* be needed, but it's important to ensure they are being used appropriately. Unnecessary antibiotic use can contribute to AMR, making infections more difficult to treat in the future.



Bacteria in the urine does not always mean a resident has a UTI! Asymptomatic bacteriuria occurs when bacteria are present in the urine without signs or symptoms of a UTI. This is common among older adults. In many cases, asymptomatic residents should not be treated with antibiotics.

What should we be watching for:

- Pain or burning with urination
- New or worsening urinary urgency or frequency
- Pain or tenderness in the lower abdomen
- Fever or other signs of infection





Changes in urine colour, cloudy or foul-smelling urine, or a positive urine test alone does not necessarily indicate a UTI. Follow your homes clinical assessment procedures.



5 Ways to Help Prevent UTIs and Antimicrobial Resistance

1. Encourage hydration
2. Support Regular Toileting
3. Provide appropriate perineal care
4. Follow catheter care practices
5. Use antibiotics wisely

Local Data:

- Windsor-Essex County has one of the highest overall outpatient antibiotic prescribing rates in Ontario, reaching approximately **787 prescriptions per 1,000 population annually**
- Up to **50% of antibiotics in LTCHs are unneeded**, as residents are frequently tested or treated despite lacking true clinical symptoms
- Roughly one-third of all urinary prescriptions are written for asymptomatic residents



Myth: If a resident has an infection, antibiotics are always the answer.
Fact: Not all infections require antibiotics. Antibiotics treat bacterial infections, not viral infections.

Myth: An older resident has cloudy, foul-smelling urine, so they must have a UTI and need antibiotics.
Fact: Cloudy or foul-smelling urine alone does not establish a diagnosis of UTI. Assess the resident for appropriate signs and symptoms. Follow the homes clinical procedures before testing.



Preventing unnecessary antibiotic use is an important part of antimicrobial stewardship. Good hydration, appropriate toileting and hygiene, proper catheter care, timely assessment and adherence to IPAC practices all contribute to resident safety.

Which Antibiotic Are You??

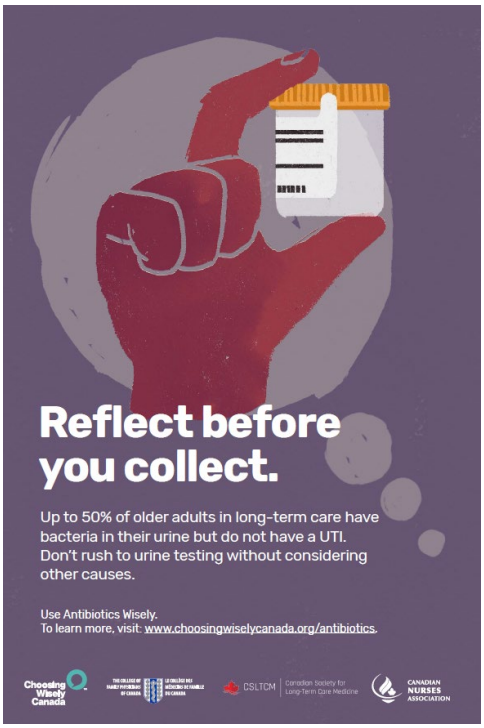
Take a quick break and discover which antibiotic best matches your personality!
This fun little quiz is just for entertainment, but we'd love to know your results.

Antibiotic Personality Quiz

Once you have completed the quiz, email us back and let us know...Which antibiotic are you?

- Prevent the infection
- Assess the resident
- Use antibiotics wisely

For additional resources, please visit: Antimicrobial Resistance | The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit



Thank you
Jill & Arlene
IPAC Hub