WHY ANTIBIOTICS DON’T WORK for COLD & FLU

Antibiotics fight bacterial infections, so they are not as helpful in treating the common cold and the flu, which are caused by viral infections. In fact, taking an antibiotic when you have a virus may do more harm than good. That’s because antibiotics may also kill some healthy bacteria that’s found in your gut, which allow some harmful bacteria to grow there instead. If you have any questions, talk to your healthcare professional.

Taking an antibiotic for a cold or the flu will not:

- Cure your infection
- Make you less contagious
- Help you feel better

Instead, cold and flu treatment should focus on resting, drinking more fluid, and easing symptoms with over-the-counter (OTC) cough and cold medicines, such as:

- Nasal decongestants to clear a stuffy nose
- Cough suppressants, or antitussives, to calm a cough
- Expectorants to break up mucus so it’s easier to cough up
- Pain relievers, like TYLENOL® Extra Strength Caplets, to lower fevers and relieve headaches, aches, and pains
- Products with multiple ingredients like TYLENOL® Cold + Flu Severe Day/Night, to help relieve multiple symptoms

COLD FIGHTING TIP
Taking an antibiotic when you have a cold or the flu may increase your risk of getting an antibiotic-resistant infection in the future.