









Quick reference guide to back-up antibiotic prescribing: good practice guide

<p>Background</p> 	<p>The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)¹ and All Wales Medicine Strategy Group (AWMSG) guidelines² recommend utilising a back-up antibiotic prescribing strategy with advice if there is uncertainty about whether a condition is self-limiting or is likely to deteriorate.</p>							
<p>The evidence</p> 	<p>No adverse effects on symptoms severity, symptom duration, hospitalisation rates or patient satisfaction compared to immediate antibiotics³.</p> <p>Reduced consultation rates & antibiotic use³.</p>							
<p>Acute conditions for considering a back-up prescribing strategy</p> 	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Sore Throat</td> <td>Cough / Bronchitis</td> <td rowspan="3"> Access AWMSG primary care antimicrobial guidance here:  </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Otitis Media</td> <td>Rhinosinusitis</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Simple Lower UTI in non-pregnant women</td> </tr> </table>	Sore Throat	Cough / Bronchitis	Access AWMSG primary care antimicrobial guidance here: 	Otitis Media	Rhinosinusitis	Simple Lower UTI in non-pregnant women	
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<p>Implementation Methods</p> 	<p>Patient-led: Prescription is given to the patient during consultation, explaining it only requires dispensing if symptoms worsen or do not improve within the specified time frame. The prescription should be endorsed BACK-UP PRESCRIPTION.</p> <p>Collect at a later date: Prescription available for collection from an agreed location if symptoms worsen or do not improve within the specified time frame e.g. GP reception, community pharmacy. The prescription should be endorsed BACK-UP PRESCRIPTION.</p> <p>Recontact: Patient re-contacts with the service for advice if symptoms worsen or do not improve within a given time frame.</p>							
<p>Patient Counselling</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reason for back-up prescription • Symptom management and anticipated symptoms duration • When to access antibiotic therapy and how • Safety netting advice • Red flags • TARGET antibiotic toolkit patient information leaflets⁴ 							
<p>References</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. NICE Guideline, NG15. Antimicrobial stewardship: systems and processes for effective antimicrobial medicine use. Aug 2015. Available at: https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng15 2. All Wales Medicines Strategy Group. Primary care antimicrobial guidelines. 2024. Available at: https://awttc.nhs.wales/medicines-optimisation-and-safety/medicines-optimisation-guidance-resources-and-data/prescribing-guidance/primary-care-antimicrobial-guidelines/ 3. Smith MK. A literature review in a systematic manner investigating various approaches to delayed prescribing: an evaluation of patient outcomes and antibiotic use. [Unpublished masters dissertation]. Cardiff University. 2022 4. The Royal College of General Physicians (RCGP) 'Treat Antibiotics Responsibly, Guidance, Education and Tools' TARGET antibiotics toolkit https://elearning.rcgp.org.uk/course/view.php?id=553#section-0 							