STRATEGIES TO REDUCE ANTIBIOTIC OVERUSE IN PRIMARY CARE: DELAYED PRESCRIBING

**ANTIMICROBIAL STEWARDSHIP STRATEGY DESCRIPTION**

When assessing patients with possible bacterial infections (i.e., sinusitis, otitis media):

- Give them a postdated antibiotic prescription and
- Ask them to fill it at a pharmacy only if specific criteria are met (i.e., symptoms continue or worsen)

**RESOURCES & HOW TO INCORPORATE INTO PRACTICE**

The Cold Standard Toolkit by Choosing Wisely Canada (CWC) gives practical tips on how to implement this strategy for in-person/virtual visits.

Clinicians can provide this handout from CWC to patients along with a delayed prescription.

Available in different languages, the handout can also be incorporated into an electronic medical record (EMR).

**IMPACT ON ANTIMICROBIAL USE**

A Cochrane review found that delayed antibiotic prescriptions for respiratory tract infections are associated with lower rates of antibiotic use.

However, as 1 in 3 delayed prescriptions will be filled, this strategy should not be used for viral infections when antibiotics are not indicated (i.e.; bronchitis, viral respiratory tract infections).

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**References**


