

WHY ANTIBIOTICS ARE IMPORTANT FOR CANCER PATIENTS

Cancer treatments increase the risk of getting an infection, so antibiotics are an essential part of treating cancer patients.

Many cancer patients need antibiotics during all stages of their treatment.

Surgery	Radiotherapy	Chemotherapy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Usually used to remove tumours.• At least 5% of patients develop an infection.• Infections can cause pain, longer hospital stays, and longer recovery time.• Infections can make cancer treatments less successful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Used to kill cancer cells, but can damage nearby healthy cells.• Cells in hair, skin, and mouth and gut linings are most affected by this. Loss of these protecting cells increase the risk of getting an infection for which an antibiotic would be needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Used to stop the growth of cancer cells.• Weakens the immune system and increases the risk of getting an infection.• Infections can get worse quickly and cause severe illness.• Infections can delay further chemotherapy sessions and make cancer treatment less successful.

Antibiotics are crucial for controlling these infections and improving survival rates.

Most cancer patients will need antibiotics to survive. Antibiotic resistance means that current antibiotics may not work. In addition, very few new treatments are being developed. This means that cancer survival rates may decrease because doctors might not be able to control infections.

It is VITAL that we preserve our antibiotics, minimise the spread of bacteria, and protect cancer patients from catching antibiotic-resistant infections.

- 1. Don't ask and don't expect antibiotics for colds, sore throats, or flu—these are caused by viruses so antibiotics don't work.**
- 2. Only take antibiotics given to you by your doctor and EXACTLY as written on the bottle and always complete the full course.**
- 3. Never give your antibiotics to other people.**

