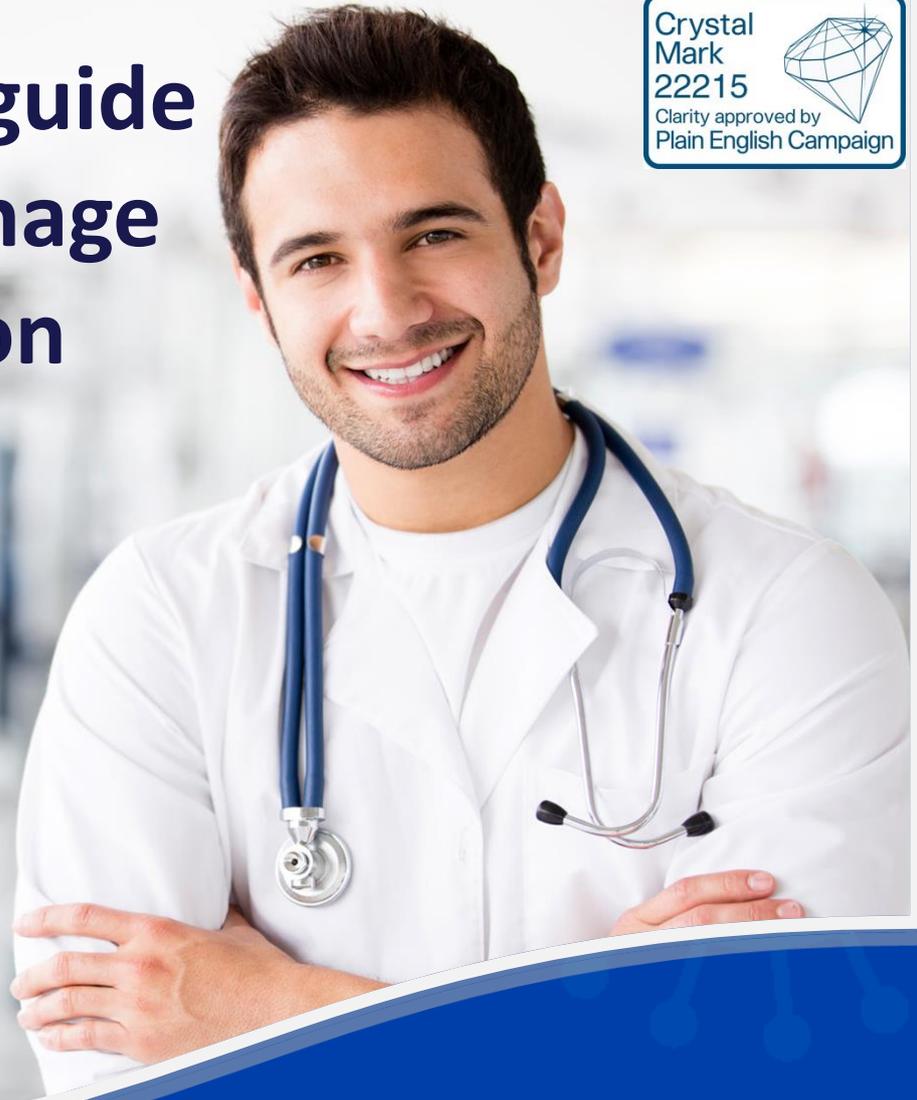


# Managing your infection



## A step-by-step guide on how to manage your infection



## Self-care steps

- Step 1: How to help make yourself better
- Step 2: Check how long your symptoms last
- Step 3: Look out for serious symptoms
- Step 4: Where to get help

### Developed with:



Public Health England



TARGET  
[www.rcgp.org.uk/targetantibiotics](http://www.rcgp.org.uk/targetantibiotics)



e-Bug  
Operated by Public Health England  
[www.e-Bug.eu](http://www.e-Bug.eu)



### Endorsed by:



techyd Cyhoeddus Cymru  
Public Health Wales



The British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy



Royal College of General Practitioners



Royal College of Nursing

Professionals, including nurses, and service users were involved in the development of the leaflet.

# Step 1: How to help make yourself better

Whatever your infection, you can do the following to help.



**Take paracetamol to reduce a fever. Always follow the instructions.**



**Ask your pharmacist for advice on reducing your symptoms.**



**Get plenty of rest until you feel better.**



**Drink enough fluids to avoid feeling thirsty.**



**Use tissues when you sneeze to help stop infections spreading.**



**Wash your hands to help stop infections spreading.**

For more information, visit the NHS Choices website: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

Most common infections get better without antibiotics. Find out how you can make better use of antibiotics by visiting: [www.antibioticguardian.com](http://www.antibioticguardian.com)

# Step 2: Check how long your symptoms last

## Earache



An earache usually lasts 4 days

Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## Sore throat



A sore throat usually lasts 7 days

Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## Cold



A cold usually lasts 10 days

Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## Cough



A cough usually lasts 21 days

Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

If you are not starting to improve a little by the times given above, get advice from your GP practice.

If you are feeling a lot worse, phone

**NHS 111**, **NHS Direct Wales** or **NHS 24** (see step 4).

# Step 3: Look out for serious symptoms

If you have an infection and develop any of the symptoms below, you should be seen **urgently by a doctor**. Ring your **GP practice** or call **NHS 111**, **NHS Direct Wales** or **NHS 24**.



**Severe headache**



**Very cold skin**



**Trouble breathing**



**Feeling confused**



**Chest pain**



**Problems swallowing**



**Coughing blood**



**Feeling a lot worse**

# Step 4: Where to get help

**NHS England**



when it's less  
urgent than 999

**NHS Direct Wales**

**NHS Direct Wales**  
**0845 46 47**  
**Galw IECHYD Cymru**

**NHSScotland**

**NHS**  
**24**  
Call us free on  
**111**

## **Emergency**

If you have an emergency, call **999** immediately.