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HOW LONG CAN I TAKE AN ANTIBIOTIC TO TREAT MY ACNE?



You can reduce the amount of time you need to take an antibiotic by using all of the medicine in your treatment plan.

Acne isn't an infection, but an antibiotic can provide real relief from deep, painful breakouts.

Certain antibiotics such as doxycycline (dox-ē-cyc-lean) and erythromycin (eh-rith-row-my-cin) can reduce the amount of *P. acnes* bacteria on your skin and lessen inflammation. When that happens, you may see less acne and sometimes clearing.

Take an antibiotic for the shortest time possible

When including an antibiotic in your acne treatment plan, your dermatologist will prescribe it for the shortest time possible. Because acne takes time to treat, this usually means three to four months. However, some people who have acne need more time on an antibiotic.

Four ways to reduce how long you take an antibiotic

You can shorten the amount of time that you need an antibiotic in your treatment plan by doing the following:

- 1. Use all of medicine in your treatment plan.**

When taken alone, an antibiotic can quickly lose its ability to fight acne. When this happens, the bacteria continue to grow and you can develop a condition known as antibiotic resistance. Antibiotic resistance is a global health problem. That's why your dermatologist prescribes other acne medicine along with an

antibiotic. You may need to use benzoyl peroxide or adapalene (ah-dap-ah-lean) gel along with an antibiotic.

2. Reduce acne flares with gentle skin care.

To get rid of acne, you may be tempted to scrub your skin clean. Scrubbing can irritate your skin and worsen acne. You can reduce flare-ups by following the skin care tips at, [Acne: Tips for Managing](#).

3. Keep all follow-up appointments with your dermatologist.

This will allow your dermatologist to see whether the treatment is working. Some patients need a different antibiotic. Others need a different type of treatment.

4. Follow your maintenance plan.

Once your skin clears, you'll need different acne treatment to prevent new breakouts. Most people can keep their skin clear by using medicine they apply to their skin. Continuing to use the acne treatment in your maintenance plan will help you keep your skin clear and reduce the need for stronger acne medicine like an antibiotic.

An antibiotic can play an important role in helping to clear acne. If you take an antibiotic to treat your acne, be sure to take it seriously. This will allow you to get the most benefit in the shortest time possible.

Image

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References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). "[Antibiotic/Antimicrobial resistance](#)." Last accessed April 19, 2017.

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