

STRATEGIES TO REDUCE ANTIBIOTIC OVERUSE IN PRIMARY CARE: VIRAL PRESCRIBING PAD

ANTIMICROBIAL STEWARDSHIP STRATEGY DESCRIPTION

When seeing patients with upper respiratory tract infection (URTI):



- Give them a viral prescription that contains information about non-antibiotic, supportive treatment options.

RESOURCES & HOW TO INCORPORATE INTO PRACTICE

Choosing Wisely Canada (CWC) has [adult](#) and [pediatric viral prescriptions](#) that can be integrated into your [electronic medical record \(EMR\)](#).¹



[The Cold Standard Toolkit](#) by Choosing Wisely Canada (CWC) gives practical tips on how to implement this strategy for in-person and virtual visits.²

- Additional patient educational materials are available through CWC's [Patient Resources](#) and Do Bugs Need Drugs? [Guide to Wise Use of Antibiotics](#).^{1,3}

IMPACT ON ANTIMICROBIAL USE



A mixed methods study of family physicians and patients found the viral prescription pad to be useful for facilitating communication about the appropriate use of antibiotics.⁴



76% Reduction
in antibiotic use
with non-antibiotic
“wellness bags”

Use of “wellness bags” containing non-antibiotic options (cough drops, hand sanitizer) reduced antibiotic use for **URTI**.⁶

References

1. Choosing Wisely Canada. Using antibiotics wisely [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Choosing Wisely Canada; [2022] [cited 2022 Sep 19]. Available from: <https://choosingwiselycanada.org/primary-care/antibiotics/>
2. Choosing Wisely Canada. The cold standard: a toolkit for using antibiotics wisely in the era of COVID-19 and virtual care [Internet]. 3rd ed. Toronto, ON: Choosing Wisely Canada; 2021 [cited 2022 Sep 19]. Available from: <https://choosingwiselycanada.org/toolkit/the-cold-standard/>
3. British Columbia Centre for Disease Control; Community Antimicrobial Stewardship Program. Do bugs need drugs? Guide to wise use of antibiotics [Internet]. Vancouver, BC: British Columbia Centre for Disease Control; 2022 [cited 2022 Sep 19]. Available from: <https://dobugsneeddrugs.org/>
4. Lee C, Jafari M, Brownbridge R, Phillips C, Vanstone JR. The viral prescription pad - a mixed methods study to determine the need for and utility of an educational tool for antimicrobial stewardship in primary health care. BMC Fam Pract. 2020;21(1):42. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12875-020-01114-z>
5. Choosing Wisely United States. Bagging antibiotics in Maine [Internet]. Philadelphia, PA: Choosing Wisely United States; 2017 [cited 2022 Sep 19]. Available from: <https://www.choosingwisely.org/resources/updates-from-the-field/bagging-antibiotics-in-maine/>