

If you are not sure what to do, contact your pharmacist (chemist) or doctor. If you are taking **Rifampicin/Rifabutin** then please seek further advice.

Free condoms are available from all Contraception and Sexual Health Clinics.

### Contact Details

If you have any questions please telephone the RUH Emergency Department on

**01225 824000 (day)**  
**01225 825015 (night)**

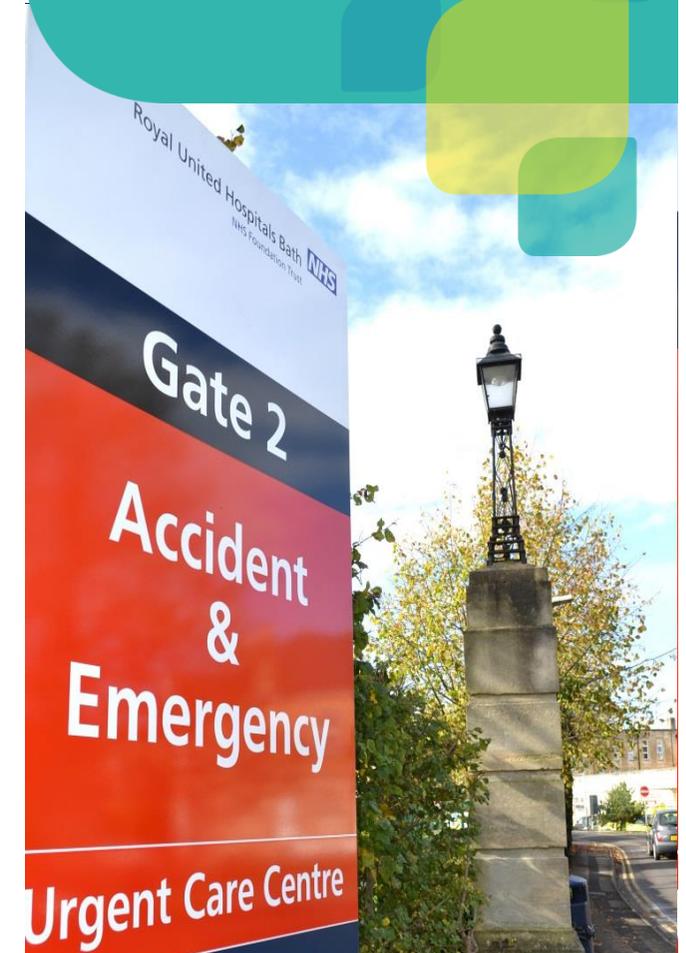
Royal United Hospitals Bath  
NHS Foundation Trust  
Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG  
01225 428331 [www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital.

Email [ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net](mailto:ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net)  
or telephone 01225 825656.

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## Antibiotics



# Antibiotics

## Instructions for Use

You should always complete the full course of antibiotics even if you feel better.

## Special Considerations

Tell the hospital doctor or nurse if you have had a previous reaction to an antibiotic or if you have kidney or liver problems or if you are pregnant, breast-feeding or on the contraceptive pill.

## Side Effects of Antibiotics

Common side-effects include:  
Nausea (feeling sick), vomiting, skin rashes, diarrhoea, thrush.

Rare side-effects include:  
Allergic reactions including fever, joint pains, rashes, angioedema (swelling in the eyes, lips or tongue) and anaphylaxis (a very serious allergic reaction).

There are other known rare side-effects. If you experience any other symptoms or have any concerns contact your GP for advice.

## Drug Interactions

If you want to check that your medicines are safe to take with antibiotics, you can ask your GP or local pharmacist (chemist). Please read the patient information leaflet that comes with your medicine.

## Food

Some antibiotics should be taken on an empty stomach whilst others should be taken with food. Consult the information leaflet that comes with your medicine to get the correct guidance. For example: Co-amoxiclav (Augmentin) should be taken with food to reduce irritation to the stomach. Flucloxacillin should be taken on an empty stomach or one hour before meals to ensure that it is absorbed into the body properly.

## Alcohol

There are no known interactions between most antibiotics and alcohol. However, please read the advice leaflet and avoid alcohol altogether if you are taking Metronidazole, Tinidazole, Co-trimoxazole, Linezolid, Erythromycin.

## Missed Doses

If you forget to take a dose of antibiotic, you should take it as soon as you remember unless the next dose is due immediately.

Check the information leaflet that comes with your medicine. This should give you advice about what to do if you miss a dose. If you need further advice, contact your GP or pharmacist (chemist).

## Combined Oral Contraceptives (or patch)

How to minimise the risk of pregnancy: Women on a short course of antibiotics (up to 3-weeks) who take combined oral contraceptives ('the pill') should use an extra form of contraception (for example: condoms) for the duration of the course and for a further seven days after finishing the course. If this runs beyond the end of the contraceptive pill packet into the pill free break, start a new packet without the usual break.

If you are taking an every day contraceptive pill and the further seven day period following the antibiotic course runs into the inactive pills (the last seven pills in the packet), start a new packet without taking the inactive pills.