

**Antibiotics and Upper Respiratory Infections**  
**A video produced under the partnership of Kaiser Permanente and CDC**

**FULL TEXT TRANSCRIPT**

1:00:00        *(patient coughs)*

1:00:02        **Physician:** Hi, Ms. Martinez

1:00:04        **Ms. Martinez:** Hi

1:00:05        **Physician:** I'm Dr. Jung. I understand you are here about your cold.  
How can I help you with that today?

1:00:09        **Ms. Martinez:** I've been coughing all the time. I can't sleep. And I've  
been blowing my nose so much, my nose is raw. In the past, I've taken  
antibiotics and it's helped me feel better.

01:00:21        **Physician:** Hmm... anything else going on?

01:00:23        **Ms. Martinez:** Umm..I got his headache...and I feel hot.

01:00:30        **Physician:** And what have you tried to do so far to take care of this?

01:00:33        **Ms. Martinez:** Umm.. I took some Tylenol; I took a day off of work,  
but it hasn't helped--I still feel awful.

01:00:39        **Physician:** Hmm.. sounds like you're feeling pretty miserable with all  
this. Anything else?

01:00:43        **Ms. Martinez:** Well, I've been trying to drink a lot of orange juice. But I  
usually get a cold every year and antibiotics really help you feel better  
faster.

01:00:53        **Physician:** How long has this been going on?

01:00:55        **Ms. Martinez:** About four days. I'm really worried 'cause I should be  
feeling better by now and I hope it's nothing serious. Umm, should I be  
taking some antibiotics for this?

01:01:06        **Physician:** So you're kinda worried this may be something more serious  
than a cold--something that might need antibiotics?  
Well, let me take a few moments to carefully examine you and then we  
can talk about next steps.  
*Physician stands to do exam*  
Can I take look in your ears first?

01:01:20 **Ms. Martinez:** Yeah, sure.

01:01:22 **Physician:** OK

*PHYSICAL EXAMINATION,  
TRANSITION TO END OF EXAM*

01:01:26 **Physician:** Perfect

01:01:27 *(patient coughs)*

01:01:30 **Physician:** Well, your heart sounds good, your lungs are clear and you don't have a fever. Your ears look great and your throat's a little bit red but based on everything that you've told me so far and what I can clearly see now, I'd say you're suffering from a really bad cold. Could we spend a few moments and talk about antibiotics and colds?

01:01:50 **Ms. Martinez:** Oh, okay.

01:01:52 **Physician:** The science and the research studies are very clear-- antibiotics do not relieve colds and they don't shorten their duration. Antibiotics can be useful for certain bacterial infections, but I don't think that's what's going on right now.

01:02:06 **Ms. Martinez:** I don't have an infection?

01:02:08 **Physician:** Well, no--you do have an infection, but not the kind that is gonna to get better with antibiotics. You have a viral infection or a cold, and the things that help viruses are rest, drinking plenty of fluids and taking medications to help control the symptoms, like Tylenol for the headache and Sudafed for the stuffy nose.

01:02:26 **Ms. Martinez:** But I've already been sick for four days!

01:02:28

**Physician:** Mmmm...and I can tell you've been really miserable these last four days. Sometimes viruses can last ten to fourteen days. And at this point, I'm convinced that antibiotics are not gonna help you feel any better and I have grave concerns about giving you a medicine that could potentially harm you.

*(reaches for kit)*

What I'd recommend instead are the medicines contained in this cold kit, because these are gonna start working on your symptoms and help you feel better right away.

If you're not feeling better in three or four days, give me a call back. We might need to reevaluate things; we might need to change your treatment plan a little bit.

Now I know you're concerned about needing antibiotics for your condition today, but given everything we've talked about, how does this plan sound to you?

01:03:14

**Ms. Martinez:** well, I wish there was...

*(trails off)*

**FADE TO BLACK**