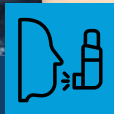




Viral Infections: Treating Older Adults

Respiratory viruses commonly cause illness such as influenza, COVID-19, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), especially in the fall and winter. These viruses cause hospitalizations and deaths every year. Below are tips to help treat viral infections and use antibiotics correctly.



Avoid fluoroquinolones in general, especially in acute bronchitis and acute sinusitis due to:

- Risk of serious side effects
- Usually caused by a virus, which antibiotics do not treat

More than 80% of COPD exacerbation can be managed in the nursing home

- Treat with an inhaler not antibiotics.
- Steroids may be used.

Consider antibiotics for acute sinusitis when:

- Symptoms for > 10 days
- Severe symptoms
- High fever, purulent nasal drainage, or facial pain for 3+ days
- Worsening symptoms after a viral illness that lasted 5 days

Before starting antibiotics, test older adults with flu-like or nonspecific symptoms for:

- COVID-19
- INFLUENZA
- RSV

COVID-19

Prevention: Keep older adults and staff up to date on COVID-19 immunizations according to the latest CDC Recommendations.

Treatment: Nirmatrelvir (Paxlovid) and ritonavir (Norvir)
-Initiate treatment within 5 days of symptom onset

INFLUENZA

Prevention: Vaccinate older adults and healthcare professionals yearly with influenza vaccine.

Treatment: Oseltamivir (Tamiflu) or baloxavir (Xofluza) are recommended for older adults. Consider prophylactic use during nursing home outbreaks.

RSV

Prevention: Adults aged 60 and older may be vaccinated with a single dose of RSV vaccine using shared clinical decision making.

Treatment: Drink plenty of fluids and manage symptoms such as fever and pain with over-the-counter medications.