

Making sure I get the right treatment for my chest infection

How can a simple test help?

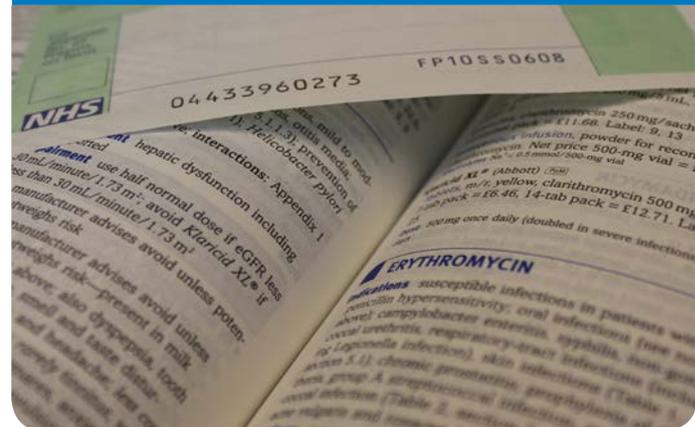


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What is special about this test?

Here at this surgery we are using a simple finger prick test to help us understand what is causing your cough or chest infection.

Your chest infection may be caused by bacteria or a virus. Antibiotics will only work for a chest infection caused by a bacterial infection, they will not work if your infection is caused by a virus.

Most infections will clear up on their own unless you have a long term condition or you have problems fighting off infections for other reasons.

You may have heard of antibiotic resistant bacteria. These are linked to taking antibiotics when they are not needed. This finger prick test can give results in 2-3 minutes helping you and your GP or nurse decide if antibiotics will work.

The test is part of an important project to help improve people's health and the treatment they get and has been shown to help cut use of antibiotics when they are not needed.

These tests being done at surgeries around the country help us to see how much we can reduce the chances of bacteria becoming resistant to antibiotics.

Thank you for being part of this important work, and helping to improve the care people get in our NHS.

Antibiotics and chest infections

Antibiotics are medicines used to treat – and sometimes prevent – bacterial infections. They can be used to treat relatively mild conditions, as well as life-threatening conditions such as pneumonia. However, antibiotics often have no benefit for many other types of infection. Many chest infections aren't serious and get better within 2 to 3 weeks. You won't usually need to see your GP, unless your symptoms suggest you have a more serious infection. While you recover at home, you can improve your symptoms by:

- Getting plenty of rest
- Drinking lots of fluid to prevent dehydration
- Treating headaches, fever and aches and pains with painkillers such as paracetamol
- Drinking a warm drink of honey and lemon to relieve a sore throat caused by persistent coughing
- Raising your head up with extra pillows while you are sleeping to make breathing easier
- Giving up smoking (if you smoke)

Your GP will usually only prescribe antibiotics if they think you have pneumonia, or you are at risk of complications.