

## **Antibiotic “coping strategies”**

### **1. Don't make assumptions about what the patient wants**

There is good evidence that if the clinician assumes the patient is expecting an antibiotic prescription they are 10 times more likely to issue one (Cockburn et al)

Ask the question – “are you expecting an antibiotic?”

### **2. Give a patient information leaflet rather than a prescription**

Patients are often seeking assurance. Rather than giving a prescription give a patient information leaflet. There are all sorts available. They can be printed off Mentor Plus (see list attached). Similar leaflets can also be found on EMIS.

### **3. Delayed scripts**

Give a script for antibiotic treatment but ask patient only to have it dispensed if symptoms have not resolved after 48 to 72 hours. For acute otitis media give analgesia.

Cate et al found that by using this strategy for otitis media amoxicillin use was reduced from 32% TO 12%.

Little P et al found that this strategy worked for sore throat.