

Foods to avoid when taking antibiotics

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In Uganda, it is common for individuals to get over-the-counter antibiotics when treating common infections such as tonsillitis and urinary tract infections without seeing a doctor for proper prescription and caution.

Antibiotics cure bacterial infections, meaning they are useless against viral infections such as colds or flu, most coughs, bronchitis, runny noses and sore throats not caused by strep.

However, very few people are lucky to get or seek the correct way of using common antibiotics.

Bacterial infections are illnesses that occur when harmful forms of bacterial multiply inside the body, ranging from mild to severe.

Therefore, other than the most common side effects, both short and long term, effects of hearing loss, nausea, diarrhea and kidney damage respectively, antibiotics may fail to work effectively due to reactions with the foods in the body.

Probiotics

Jamir Mpiima, a nutritionist at Victoria Wellness Clinic, says foods such as carbonated beverages and fruits such as lemon, pineapple, and citrus juice which are acidic should be avoided several hours before and after taking antibiotics.



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foods to avoid when taking antibiotics

When you are taking medication, the last thing you want to do is reduce its effectiveness by eating or drinking the wrong thing. When your doctor prescribes an antibiotic, ask if any particular food interacts with the drug or reduces its effectiveness.

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“Instead, take antibiotics with probiotics (some strains of bacteria have been indicated to help treat or prevent antibiotics from causing diarrhea), also called healthy bacteria found in certain yogurts and fermented foods,” Mpiima says.

Similarly, other foods which contain calcium and iron such as milk, Mpiima says, can interfere with the body’s ability to absorb some antibiotics.

Dr Vincent Karuhanga, a general physician at Polyclinic in Kampala, says antibiotics like any other drugs can affect what we eat and what we eat can also affect the drugs, the reason we ought to be sure of what we eat.

“If you are taking a certain antibiotic, its absorption can be

affected by what you eat before or after.

“Therefore, use plain water instead of juice or tea while taking antibiotics so that one of these

What other experts say

Watch the calcium and iron. Do not give your child antibiotics with calcium- or iron-rich foods such as milk, hot dogs or iron-fortified cereal. “Calcium and iron can interfere with the body’s ability to absorb certain kinds of antibiotics known as quinolones,” says Katrina Seidman, a registered dietitian at the Johns



Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. **Time it right.** If your child eats food with calcium or iron, or took a multivitamin, wait three hours before giving the antibiotic so the body will absorb more of the medicine, Seidman said.

Eat soup. Nutrient-dense soups which supply antioxidants and phytochemicals, are the number one food to eat while on antibiotics, says Dr Ingrid Kohlstadt, editor of the textbook “*Food and Nutrients in Disease Management*”

Go low-acid. Acidic foods such as citrus juice, carbonated beverages,

chocolate, antacids and tomato-based products such as ketchup can all interfere with drug absorption. Have your child avoid these several hours before and after taking the medication, said Seidman.

With the exception of yogurt, avoid dairy, said Kohlstadt. “The gastrointestinal barrier and the gut immune system undergo several changes from both the antibiotic and the infection,” she said. “If you do eat dairy, make it yogurt low in sugar and lots of active cultures. Choose rice and oats over wheat.”

Source: www.articles.chicagotribune.com

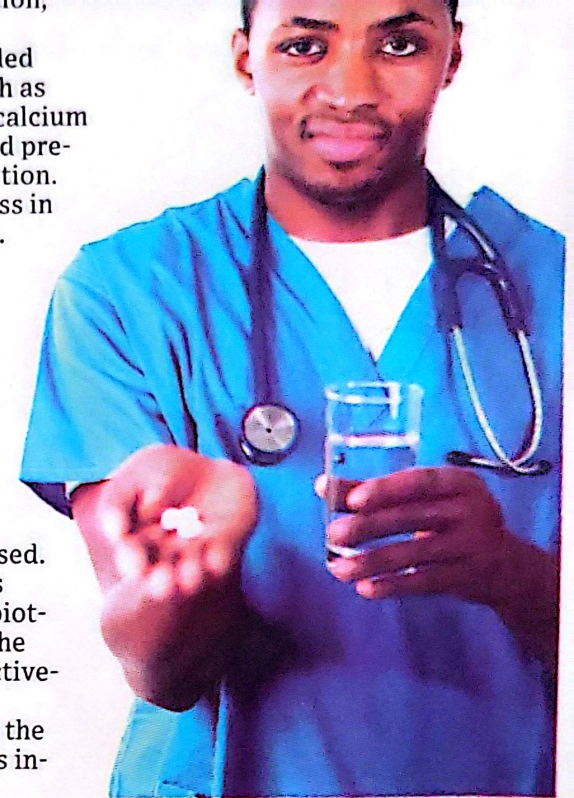
does not disturb its absorption, Dr Karuhanga says.

Milk should also be avoided when taking antibiotics such as tetracycline because it has calcium which binds tetracycline and prevents it from proper absorption. This reduces its effectiveness in treating infections, he adds.

“For better absorption of Penicillin [another antibiotic], one should eat an hour after taking it when you are sure that the drug has already been absorbed,” he says, adding that penicillin should not be taken on a full stomach as its absorption and effectiveness are still compromised.

Dr Karuhanga also warns women against taking antibiotics with contraceptives as the latter would affect the effectiveness of antibiotics.

He, however, encourages the consumption of leafy greens instead.



FOOD WARS