



Some tips for managing respiratory tract infections this autumn - winter:

Self-limiting & viral illnesses in children: The return of children to schools, pre-schools and crèches will bring an evitable increase in respiratory illnesses, the majority of which are viral and self-limiting. New guidance specifically for children has been added to www.antibioticprescribing.ie for acute cough, bronchiolitis and otitis media. For each of these conditions in the majority of children *no antibiotics are indicated* and encourage parents towards self-care and conservative management. The HSE website www.undertheweather.ie is a really useful resource to direct patients and parents to for this self-care advice.

Reduced antibiotic course durations: A reminder that as of last year for the following conditions: sinusitis, pharyngitis/sore throat, acute bronchitis/cough, infective exacerbation of COPD and community acquired pneumonia in adults & children, the guidance was updated that if antibiotics are warranted, the recommended duration of therapy is **5 days**.

Influenza: Australia has had higher notifications of influenza this season, however caution is advised as their testing and surveillance systems have changed over recent years and may not be comparable to previous flu seasons. Consider influenza as part of your differential when patients present with a respiratory illness.