



The bpac^{nz} antibiotic guide: 2017 edition

The 2017 edition of the bpac^{nz} antibiotics guide; Antibiotics: choices for common infections, is now available online. There are several new features of this guideline, along with some changes in advice. The release of the guide is also an opportunity to revise recommendations for prescribing in respiratory tract infections, including strategies for managing patient expectations.

bpac^{nz} is pleased to present the 2017 edition of “Antibiotics: choices for common infections”. The bpac^{nz} antibiotic guide was first published in 2011 as a supplement to Best Practice Journal. A revised version of the printed booklet was published in 2013, with minor updates online. The Antibiotic Guide holds the record for our most popular resource – every month it is accessed online approximately 7000 times.

The 2017 version is available electronically only; we know that many of you prefer the printed booklet form and have faithfully kept hold of dog-eared copies, but an online version allows us to make updates as necessary, given the rapidly changing landscape of antibiotic choices. We have included the option for individuals to print a copy from the most current online version, but we recommend that you regularly check the online version to see if any revisions have been made.

What is new?

The bpac^{nz} Antibiotics Guide aims to give clear guidance on the antibiotic treatment of infections most frequently seen in primary care in New Zealand. This includes guidance on the clinical circumstances that indicate when an antibiotic is required, and the most appropriate choice, dose and duration of treatment.

Since the Guide was first published, we have seen a trend towards shorter courses of antibiotics, more intensive dosing regimens and reserving use of broader spectrum antibiotics for very specific clinical scenarios. Choices of antibiotics change over time in response to growing antimicrobial resistance – this may be because the conventional choice is no longer effective due to high resistance levels or the need to preserve use of that antibiotic to ensure that it remains a viable option when needed.

Key changes in the 2017 Antibiotics Guide include:

- Management sections have been updated to reflect current evidence and practice
- The “Antibiotic treatment” header within each condition gives information on when antibiotics are required, e.g. “severe infection”, “with risk factors”