

COMPANION KIT · CHAPTER 8

My Antibiotic Recovery Toolkit

A 2-week plan, a practical checklist and a daily diary for recovery after antibiotics, with a leaflet and timing sheet for your course and a page to review how it went. Print it, or fill it in on screen.

Start
Read the safety notes on the first page.

Track
Follow the plan and fill in the diary each day.

Review
Use the last page to decide what to do next.

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My Antibiotic Recovery Toolkit

For adults. General information and diary pages to use alongside advice from your own doctor, nurse or pharmacist. Never stop or change a prescribed medicine without the prescriber's agreement. Read the safety page before using this workbook.

EMERGENCY NOW

Sudden severe abdominal pain, blood/coffee-ground vomit, confusion, serious breathing problems or severe allergic symptoms need emergency care.

CALL ABOUT DIARRHOEA

Contact your doctor or urgent advice service for diarrhoea during or after antibiotics. Blood, fever, significant pain, symptoms lasting more than seven days, inability to keep fluids down or dehydration need urgent advice. Do not wait for day 15.

FOLLOW THE PRESCRIPTION

Use the actual prescribed start/end dates. Never stop on day seven because a worksheet says "after the course". Do not use leftovers or someone else's antibiotics. Confirm food, alcohol, mineral and other-medicine instructions for your specific antibiotic.

C. DIFFICILE AND PROBIOTICS

If C. difficile is suspected, seek medical advice and do not self-use loperamide; wash hands with soap and water. Probiotics are not necessary for everyone. Serious illness, weakened immunity or a central line require medical advice before any probiotic.

My main question / professional already involved

A 2-week plan

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

Choose the steps that suit you. You do not need to do all of them.

Before / early in the course

Record the antibiotic, actual prescribed dates and dose times. Ask a pharmacist about interactions, food, alcohol and contraceptive questions. Start the diary.

While taking the prescribed course

Take doses exactly as directed, eat as tolerated and maintain appropriate fluids. Contact a clinician for diarrhoea. Discuss probiotics only if appropriate; do not copy a universal spacing rule.

After the actual course ends

Once stools settle, bring fibre foods back gradually and try tolerated foods from the chapter. Review any probiotic use with the pharmacist rather than continuing indefinitely. No detox or reset kit is needed.

Day 15 / agreed review

Review symptoms and questions; microbiome recovery can take weeks or months. The 14-day record is an observation window, not a promise of full recovery or a fixed antibiotic duration.

The one step I choose first

Review date and who I will contact if needed

My practical checklist

Tick what you have done and note what to do next.

- [ ] I am taking the antibiotic exactly as prescribed
- [ ] I know the red flags and when to call for advice
- [ ] I have checked the leaflet for dairy, antacids, iron, alcohol and the pill
- [ ] I drink plenty, and use an oral rehydration drink if I get diarrhoea
- [ ] Any probiotic decision, timing and stop/review date have been discussed with a pharmacist or clinician where appropriate; I have not assumed it is needed.
- [ ] I am bringing fibre back gradually
- [ ] I have a fermented food every day and add new plants each week
- [ ] I keep a recovery diary and reviewed it on day 15

One question this checklist raised

My repeatable diary

Print a fresh page whenever you need one.

Today

Date and day of the course

Antibiotic doses taken (times)

Bowel movements: number and Bristol type (1-2 hard, 3-4 comfortable, 5-7 loose)

Bloating score (0 to 10)

Fluids (glasses) and any oral rehydration drink

Thrush symptoms (yes or no)

Red flags (blood, fever, pain, more than 7 days)

Notes: how I feel, what helped, what to ask my doctor

What I ate

Probiotic (name and time)

Fibre foods

Fermented foods

Number of different plants

Steps practised

Fluids

Leaflet checked

Probiotic spaced from antibiotic

Fibre brought back

Fermented food

New plant this week

Overview · days 1–14

A short summary of your diary. Leave a gap on days you do not record.

Scores are your own notes. A pattern here cannot show a food intolerance, a medicine effect or an IBS type.

Day / date	On / after actual course	Stool count / reference	Fluids / concerns	Symptoms / contact
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				

What helped, what was difficult, and what else might explain a change?

My antibiotic leaflet and timing sheet

Complete from your prescription, leaflet and pharmacist's advice.

My actual course

Antibiotic name, reason, prescribed start/end dates, dose and times.

Food and other medicines

Individual food/dairy/mineral/antacid instructions and confirmed spacing.

Alcohol and contraception questions

What the pharmacist said for this medicine and any vomiting/diarrhoea advice.

If a probiotic is appropriate

Professional advice, product, timing and agreed stop/review date.

Care contact and symptom onset

Who to contact; diarrhoea began when; bowel frequency, fever, blood and fluid concerns.

Review and next steps

Warning signs always need earlier care.

What changed, if anything?

Compare similar days and note gaps; no improvement is also useful information.

What might explain it?

Food, stress, sleep, medicines, timing and natural variation may overlap.

What I will keep or stop recording

Choose a manageable routine; stop burdensome tracking or a practice that causes distress.

What needs a professional conversation?

Questions, care contact, agreed action and follow-up date.