



BVMC VIRAL ILLNESS PROTOCOL

This document was created due to patients calling and requesting prescriptions for antibiotics and for various other prescription strength medications to treat their viral illnesses. First, it is important to understand antibiotics will not address or help viral illness. If you have received relief from antibiotics while having a viral illness it was only a coincidence and not because the antibiotics helped. This is not to say you cannot develop a secondary bacterial infection after primary viral illness. One way to tell is if you get better, then get sick again. If symptoms last greater than 3 weeks most often antibiotics are appropriate. In these cases, judicious use of antibiotics is appropriate. I would encourage you to try the following for at least one week before calling our office requesting prescription medications.

The following is symptomatic protocol for viral illness:

- ▶ Drink plenty of water
- ▶ Get plenty of rest
- ▶ If you have a cough that is productive (*Phlegm*) use an expectorant; such as OTC Mucinex.
- ▶ Use an OTC oral decongestant for severe sinus congestion (*active ingredient is phenylephrine*).
- ▶ If you have a fever, take Tylenol. Do not exceed 3,000 mg of Tylenol in a 24 hours period.
- ▶ For nasal congestion also use a nasal decongestant (*Afrin nasal spray 1 – 2 spray in each nostril once daily x5 days*).
- ▶ Salt water gargle 3 – 4 time per day for sore throat.
- ▶ Twice daily nasal irrigation with normal saline, neti pot, or lavage.