

Antibiotics: Cephalosporins

Examples: *1st Generation:* Duricef, Keflex, Cefadryl
2nd Generation: Ceclor, Cefzil, Ceftin, Zinacef, Lorabid, Cefotan
3rd Generation: Omnicef, Suprax, Vantin, Cefizax, Rocephin, Fortaz



Used To Treat: Bacterial infections particularly gram-positive bacteria although the second and third generation drugs are also active against gram-negative bacteria. The question of whether a bacterium is gram positive or negative is a function of the staining and helps us categorize the bacteria for the sake of identification and treatment. Different bacteria affect different organ systems and respond to different drugs.

How They Works: These antibiotics kill bacteria by disrupting the system of the bacterial cell wall. The distinction here is that the cephalosporins are bacterial killers as opposed to some antibiotics, which only prevent the bacteria from multiplying or growing (bacteriostatic antibiotics).

Side Effects: Any antibiotic can cause diarrhea, abdominal discomfort or cramping. There is about a 5% chance that a person sensitive to penicillins will have a problem with cephalosporins.

Antibiotics: the Cephalosporins



What is an Infection?

An infection is when bacteria that are living with us (called colonization) set up shop and start to use our resources. The pathogen (the bad guy) induces an inflammatory response from the host (that's us) and that inflammation is most often what we see on an x-ray (pneumonia for instance) or on the skin (the redness or the swelling).

The degree of infection is a function of the specific bacteria, virus or fungus, the number of organizations involved (the inoculum), and the site infected. Clearly, the state of the host is all-important. People who are immuno-deficient are not only more vulnerable to an infection but will be more difficult to treat.

Infections may be acute or chronic. Acute means that they are immediate and these infections usually resolve in a specific amount of time. Chronic means ongoing. In that case, the best medicine may only keep the infection (contained).

