Do not prescribe antibiotics for neonates without clinical signs of sepsis

In asymptomatic term and late-preterm infants with risk factors, close clinical monitoring is the safer option, allowing for adequate and timely sepsis detection while reducing unnecessary antibiotic-related harm.

What is known about antibiotics in neonates:

- Neonatal early-onset sepsis is a rare but life-threatening condition and is therefore at risk of being overdiagnosed and overtreated. Antibiotics are the most commonly prescribed medication in neonatal units.
- Early-life antibiotic exposure disrupts the developing microbiome, which may contribute to numerous diseases later in life, including diabetes, obesity, inflammatory bowel disease, asthma, and allergy and is also associated with mother-newborn separation, longer duration of hospital stay, and reduced breastfeeding rates.
- Unnecessary antibiotic use has also been associated with adverse patient outcomes and emergence of multi-resistant organisms.

How to talk with patients and parents about antibiotics in newborns:

- Avoiding unnecessary antibiotics is safe and has many advantages for your baby such as:
  - More time spent close to the parents.
  - Better development of bacterial flora.
  - More freedom of movement and motor exploration.
- Close monitoring ensures that signs of severe infection are not missed.

European Academy of Paediatrics
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EAP Choosing Wisely

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This EAP recommendation is in accordance with Choosing Wisely recommendations of:

- USA: https://www.aafp.org/pubs/afp/collections/choosing-wisely/465.html

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