

November and Antibiotic Awareness Week

November 18-24, 2023 is recognized as antibiotic awareness week. As respiratory illness, ear infections, and strep throat typically increase during winter months, it is the perfect time to become aware of antimicrobial resistance.

Antimicrobial Resistance

Antimicrobial resistance occurs when germs like bacteria or fungi no longer respond to antibiotics designed to eliminate them. Unfortunately, antimicrobial resistance is a naturally occurring process because bacteria and fungi are constantly finding new ways to avoid the effects of antibiotic and antifungal drugs used to eliminate them.



Why Should Everyone Be Concerned About Antimicrobial Resistance?

- Antimicrobial resistance jeopardizes advancements in healthcare in areas related to joint replacement, organ transplants, cancer therapy, and the treatment of chronic diseases such as diabetes, asthma, and rheumatoid arthritis.
- Antimicrobial resistant infections that require the use of second and third line antibiotics can harm you by causing serious side effects, such as organ failure and prolonged care and recovery—sometimes for months.
- More than 2.8 million antimicrobial resistant infections occur each year with more than 35,000 people dying as a result of antimicrobial resistance.
- The estimated per patient medical costs for treating antimicrobial resistance range

How to Protect Yourself from Antimicrobial Resistance

- Take your antibiotics as prescribed. Even if you are feeling better, complete the antibiotic as prescribed as some bacteria may survive and reinfect you.
- Do not share your antibiotics with other people. It is never safe or legal to share prescribed medication with other people. It would be horrible if someone had a life threatening allergic reaction to medication you shared.
- Do not save your antibiotics for later. The antibiotic may not be the correct antibiotic needed and would not include a full treatment course.
- Avoid pressuring your healthcare provider to give you antibiotics when feeling ill.
- Get recommended vaccines. Vaccinations can be an important measure in preventing resistant infections like tetanus, hepatitis, rubella, measles, and whooping cough.
- Lower your risk of getting a bacterial infection spread by food by ensuring your food is cooked to a safe temperature. Always ensure your hands are washed before cooking and eating.

References

<https://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use/week/toolkit.html>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4378521/>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/consumer-health/in-depth/antibiotics/art-20045720>

<https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images;>