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Opening Times

Monday to Friday - 9am - 5pm
Saturday & Sunday - Closed

Your FREE Healthy Living Leaflet for January 2021

1. What is antibiotic resistance?
2. How does this happen?
3. Why is this important?
4. How many people die from infections to antibiotics in Europe each year?
5. How long since a new class of antibiotics for human treatment was last introduced?
6. How many people in England take at least one course of antibiotic each year?
7. What can we do to help?
8. What is an antibiotic guardian?
9. How do I become an antibiotic guardian?
10. What is the next step?



Are your antibiotics
absolutely necessary?

Answers on the bottom of page two

What is antibiotic resistance?

Bugs, microbes or bacteria are all names for microscopic creatures that are everywhere. The majority are harmless, but some cause infections that can make us sick. Fortunately, many of these infections can be treated however certain bugs cause infections that are hard and sometimes impossible to treat. An increasing number of antibiotics we rely on are starting to fail because bacteria are not killed off by them. This is called antibiotic



resistance. It has happened because of inappropriate use and over-prescribing of antibiotics,

patients not completing their course of antibiotics, the use of antibiotics in the food chain and the pollution of our environment by antibiotics leaching into water, soil and even the air.

Why is this important?

You have probably heard of MRSA which stands for multi resistant Staphylococcus aureus and you will also know it causes a lot of deaths, especially in hospital. This is an example of what can happen when just one type of bacteria becomes resistant to lots of different types of antibiotics.

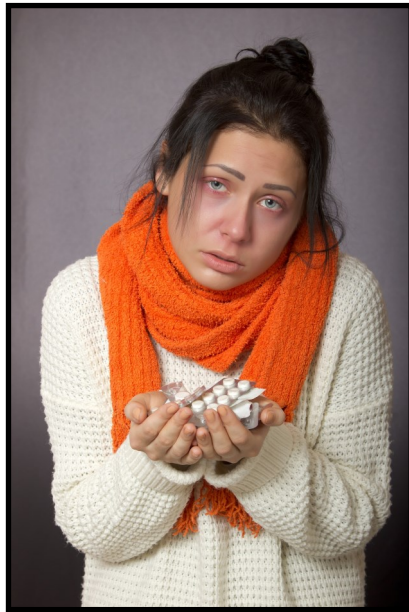
The more we use antibiotics carelessly the more bacteria will become resistant to antibiotics so common place infections like sepsis and pneumonia will become fatal. In Europe 25,000 people die each year from infections that are resistant.

What do we need to do to stop this from happening?

This threat could be reduced if new classes of antibiotics could be found but it has been 33 years since a new one was introduced. However, many scientists are working on this in the hope of finding several new ones. Also, we need to discourage doctors from prescribing antibiotics when they are not appropriate. Each year 1 in every 3 people in England have at least one course of antibiotics. This often happens when people go to their GPs for a self-limiting infection that will clear up on its own e.g. cough, colds, sore throats and insist on a prescription for an antibiotic.

You can help by waiting at least 5 days when you or your child has a self-limiting illness before going to your GP or better still visit us, so we can give you a medicine to ease your symptoms or advise you to go to the doctors if we think it is more serious.

Then there is the issue of patients not finishing their full course of antibiotics or forgetting to take the occasional dose. This means that there is not enough antibiotic in their blood stream to kill off the bacteria but enough there for the bacteria to mutate and become resistant to that antibiotic. This is why you are always told to take your antibiotics regularly and make sure you finish the course.



Antibiotic Guardian

If you want to help prevent the problem of rising antibiotic resistance, you could also become an antibiotic guardian. This involves going to www.antibioticguardian.com and signing up to one of the suggested pledges.

There are two sets of pledges – one for individuals and one for companies and organisations. The individual pledges include:

- 1) That for infections like coughs, colds, sore throat etc. I will either wait 5 days before visiting my GP or visit my pharmacist about treating the symptoms
- 2) I will pledge to take unused antibiotics back to the pharmacy for disposal
- 3) I will make sure my family always wash their hands with soap and water for 30 seconds
- 4) I will visit the www.e-bug.eu website with my children and take one of the antibiotic awareness quizzes.



The most important step after signing your pledge is to actually implement the actions you have agreed to. This way you can be part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

If you want more information about this or any other health topic talk to one of our trained team.



**BECOME AN
ANTIBIOTIC GUARDIAN**

Keep Antibiotics Working

Answers: Q1, It is when an antibiotic designed to kill bacteria no longer works. Q2, One way the bacteria become resistant is when the amount of antibiotic in your blood stream is not strong enough to kill them. The bacteria not killed mutate so they can protect themselves. Q3, It would result in people dying from common place infections like sepsis and pneumonia and from infected wounds. Q4, 25,000. Q5, 33 years. Q6, 1 in 3. Q7, If you or your child has a self-limiting illness like a cough or cold that will get better on its own, don't ask your GP for an antibiotic. Q8, An antibiotic guardian is somebody who pledges to protect the limited effective antibiotics we have left. Q9, You visit www.antibioticguardian.com and make one of the suggested pledges. Q10, Actually take action on the pledge you have made and spread the word.