

Be Antibiotics Aware: Smart Use, Best Care

November 12-18, 2018

What is US Antibiotics Awareness Week?

An annual observance to raise awareness of the threat of antibiotic resistance and the importance of appropriate antibiotic prescribing. Learn more [here](#).



Why is antibiotic misuse a concern?

- Each year, **2 million people** in the United States become infected with antibiotic resistant bacteria and at least **23,000 people** die.
- Up to **50 percent** of prescribed antibiotics **are unnecessary or inappropriate**
- The **use of antibiotics** is the most **important factor** leading to antibiotic resistance.

Five Things You Should Know About Appropriate Antibiotic Use

- **Antibiotics do not work on viruses**, such as those that cause colds, flu, bronchitis, or runny noses, even if the mucus is thick, yellow or green. Find out why antibiotics are not always the answer [here](#).
- **Antibiotics are only needed for treating infections caused by bacteria**, but even some bacterial infections get better without antibiotics, including many sinus infections and some ear infections.
- **Antibiotics will not make you feel better if you have a virus**. Respiratory viruses usually go away in a week or two without treatment. Ask your provider about how to relieve your symptoms.
- **If you need antibiotics, take them exactly as prescribed**. Talk to your provider if you have any questions or side effects such as diarrhea.
- **Antibiotics are critical tools for treating a number of common infections**, such as pneumonia, and for life-threatening conditions including sepsis.

What You Can Do

Get a flu shot Protect yourself and others by getting an annual flu shot and staying up to date with other vaccinations.

Wash your hands Limit the spread of infection by washing your hands regularly. Learn when and how to wash your hands properly [here](#).

Test your knowledge Are you an antibiotic whiz? Take a quiz to test your knowledge [here](#) or play this [game](#).

Use Social Media Check IDPH's social media pages for daily updates. Or, post on your page using #USAAW18 or #BeAntibioticsAware.

Host an event Host your own Be Antibiotics Aware event. Find activity ideas [here](#).



The Illinois Department of Public Health Division of Patient Safety and Quality is committed to work for safe, quality health care for the people of Illinois. The Division implements quality improvement initiatives and provider training and technical assistance on surveillance and prevention of healthcare associated infections. The Division promotes health care transparency and is responsible for developing and executing programs to collect and disseminate health care facility data to improve the quality and value of health care services delivered to Illinois residents.