GET SMART
Know When Antibiotics Work

FOR PROVIDERS

PRESERVE THE POWER OF ANTIBIOTICS

Antibiotic-resistant bacteria cause more than **2 million illnesses** and at least **23,000 deaths each year** in the United States. Antibiotic resistance occurs when germs no longer respond to the drugs designed to kill them. Inappropriate prescribing of antibiotics contributes to antibiotic resistance and is a threat to patient safety.

Healthcare Providers Can:

- **Prescribe correctly**
  - **Avoid treating viral syndromes** with antibiotics, even when patients ask for them.
  - **Pay attention to dose and duration:** The right antibiotic needs to be prescribed at the right dose for the right duration.
  - **Be aware of antibiotic-resistance patterns** in your area so that you can always choose the right antibiotic.
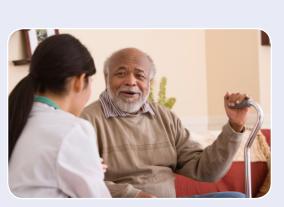 - Hospital and nursing home providers should **reassess within 48 hours of starting** the antibiotic, when the patient's culture results come back. Adjust the prescription, if necessary. Stop the prescription, if indicated.

- **Collaborate with each other and with patients**
  - **Talk to your patients** about appropriate use of antibiotics.
  - **Include microbiology cultures**, when possible, when ordering antibiotics.
  - **Work with pharmacists** to ensure appropriate antibiotic use and prevent resistance and adverse events.
  - **Use patient and provider resources** offered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and professional organizations such as Society for Healthcare Epidemiology.
    - ♦ Provider Resources: http://www.cdc.gov/getsmart/
    - ♦ Patient Resources: http://www.cdc.gov/getsmart/community/for-patients/index.html
    - ♦ General Information: http://www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/protecting_yourself_family.html

- **Stop the spread**
  - **Follow hand hygiene and other infection control measures** with every patient.

- **Embrace antibiotic stewardship**
  - **Improve antibiotic use** in all facilities—regardless of size—through stewardship interventions and programs, which will improve individual patient outcomes, reduce the overall burden of antibiotic resistance, and save healthcare dollars.
  - **Recognize and participate** in CDC's Get Smart About Antibiotics Week initiatives.

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Inpatient Settings

- Overuse of antibiotics creates an unnecessary risk for adverse drug events, such as *Clostridium difficile* infection, a sometimes deadly diarrhea.

- Antibiotic resistance adversely impacts the health of millions of hospitalized patients every year.

- Some infections in hospitals are now resistant to all available antibiotics.

- About **40% of the patients receiving antibiotics** receive unnecessary or inappropriate therapy.

Outpatient Settings

- Each year, millions of antibiotics are prescribed unnecessarily for viral infections.

- Antibiotics can cause adverse drug events and promote antibiotic resistance.
  - There are more *Clostridium difficile* infections in places with more antibiotic use.
  - Antibiotic use in primary care is associated with antibiotic resistance at the individual patient level.

- Antibiotics cause **1 in 5 emergency department visits** for adverse drug events and are the most common cause of emergency department visits for adverse drug events in children.

For more information, visit CDC's Get Smart program website:
Get Smart Resources for Healthcare Providers
http://www.cdc.gov/getsmart/week/educational-resources/hcp.html

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

For more information, please contact Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
1600 Clifton Road N.E., Atlanta, GA 30333
Telephone: 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)/TTY: 1-888-232-63548
Email: getsmart@cdc.gov Web: www.cdc.gov/getsmart

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