

WORLD ANTIMICROBIAL AWARENESS WEEK

November 18-24th

Learn about antimicrobial resistance (AMR) with the Uppsala Antibiotic Center

“Everyone, including you, can be an antimicrobial awareness champion”

DID YOU KNOW THAT...



not all bacteria are bad?

Your body is home to many helpful and harmless types of microbes that play an important role in keeping you happy and healthy.



in some cases infection treatments fail because the infecting microbe is no longer affected by the medications?

This is what we call antimicrobial resistance (AMR).



AMR is not limited to bacteria and antibiotics?

Scientists have identified resistance in viruses to antivirals, in parasites to antiparasitics, and in fungi to antifungals. Collectively, we call these drugs antimicrobials.



resistance happens to the microbes and not our bodies?

A common misconception is that resistance happens when our bodies no longer respond to antimicrobial treatment (like insulin resistance in people with diabetes). When in fact, resistance is a way for microbes to survive antibiotic treatment, and it doesn't involve our bodies.



antibiotic resistant bacteria can spread their resistance to other bacteria?

Non-harmful bacteria can develop resistance and then spread that resistance to harmful bacteria.



deaths caused by infectious diseases have decreased by 70% since antimicrobials were introduced on a large scale in the 1940s?



currently, 700 000 people die every year due to AMR infections, 33 000 in the EU alone?



the health burden of AMR infections in the EU is comparable to that of influenza, HIV/AIDS, and tuberculosis combined?



the impact of AMR is not distributed equally?

Unfortunately, developing countries in Africa and Asia are the most impacted by AMR.



that AMR is a global issue?

Anyone, of any age, in any country can contract an AMR infection.



70% of antibiotics worldwide are used on animals?

Unfortunately, a lot of these are used for growth promotion, and not veterinary medicine.



antibiotics are an integral part of cancer treatment?

Antibiotics are essential for safe surgical practices because they reduce the risk of secondary infection. One study reported that 1 in 10 cancer patients dies of sepsis rather than the cancer itself.



only one new class of antibiotics has been discovered since 1987?



since the 1960s, antimicrobials have become significantly less profitable for Pharma companies?

The increased prevalence of resistance in pathogens and the low profit margins compared to drugs used to treat chronic diseases have both been listed as key drivers. As a result, numerous companies have halted R&D initiatives aimed at discovering new antimicrobials.



controlling AMR goes beyond the hospital and the lab?

There are numerous community level policies and individual actions that can go a long way in maintaining the effectiveness of currently available drugs.

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SO... HOW CAN YOU HELP TO SLOW AMR?



Never self-medicate by taking a prescription medicine that was not prescribed for you by your doctor.



Always take your full prescription, even if you feel better. Never share or use leftover antibiotics.



Prudent use of antibiotics: only use antibiotics when needed (i.e. for infections caused by bacteria, not viruses).



Choose animal products that have been raised without the use of antibiotics.



This may seem obvious, but hygienic precautions are one of the best ways to slow the spread of AMR. Washing hands regularly, avoiding contact with sick people, keeping your vaccinations up to date, and practicing safe sex are all good ways to prevent infection and thus reduce the need for antimicrobial medications.



Write to local politicians – ask them about their party’s policy on AMR and what their government will do to ensure that our medicines are safe and effective for years to come.



Be an activist at home, spread awareness amongst friends, family, and coworkers. Everyone has the ability to make an impact!