

World Antimicrobial resistance Awareness Week

18th – 24th November



World Antimicrobial* Resistance (AMR) Awareness Week: a guide for parents and carers

What is Antibiotic Resistance?

Antibiotics are a type of antimicrobial* medicine used to treat severe infections, such as meningitis and pneumonia. However, bacteria are continually adapting to develop new ways of escaping treatment. This is called **antibiotic resistance** and is one of the biggest risks facing everyone. This resistance can spread between different bacteria in our bodies and between people and animals (whether they are healthy or ill).

Why do we need to Keep Antibiotics Working?

The more often a person takes antibiotics, the more likely they are to develop drug resistant bacteria in the body. This means that these medicines can become less effective. Without effective antibiotics, routine medical procedures, minor injuries and common illnesses can become life-threatening.

How can you help Keep Antibiotics Working?

- Antibiotics do not work on viruses such as colds, coughs and COVID-19 and may cause side effects, such as upset stomach or diarrhoea. Instead of antibiotics, rest, fluids and over-the-counter remedies are often the best approach for you and your child.
- This leaflet is useful if your child develops a cough this winter and provides guidance on when to seek medical advice. [Caring for Children with Coughs](#) (Polar Bear) leaflet
- Make sure that your child's vaccinations are up to date. Vaccines protect them and others too
- Encourage good hygiene: regular hand washing, cleaning surface and sneezing into a tissue can all help prevent infection spread

Only 2 out of 10 children actually need antibiotics for tonsillitis. ...but 7/10 get antibiotics.

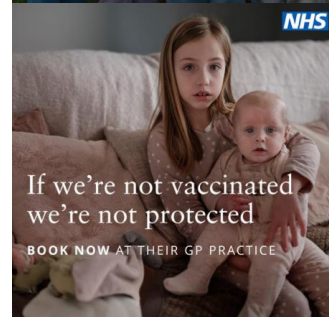
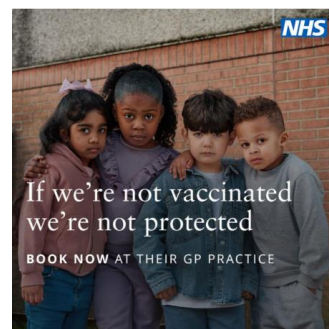


10 million people could die every year, by 2050, due to drug resistant infections.

How can you use antibiotics safely?

If you or your child is prescribed antibiotics, it's important to use them safely:

- Dispose of leftovers properly: If there are leftover antibiotics once the course is complete, take them to a pharmacy for safe disposal. Never flush them down the toilet or throw them in the bin
- Stick to the prescribed dose and timing: Give the medication exactly as instructed. Missing doses or not spacing them out correctly can reduce their effectiveness and lead to resistance.
- Don't share antibiotics: Never use leftover antibiotics or give your child medication that was prescribed for someone else. Different infections require different treatments, and using the wrong antibiotics can contribute to resistance
- This leaflet provides general advice about antibiotics and simple steps you can take to ensure the safe and appropriate use of antibiotics. [General advice about antibiotics – Medicines For Children](#)



* Antimicrobials are medicines used to prevent and treat infections caused by microorganisms (bacteria, virus, fungi and parasites) in humans, animals and plants. They include antibiotics, antivirals, antifungals and antiparasitics.