

# What is antimicrobial resistance?

## Antimicrobials\* help us prevent and treat infections<sup>1</sup>

Antimicrobial resistance happens when micro-organisms are no longer affected by the drugs designed to kill them.<sup>2</sup> **Antimicrobial resistance (AMR)** refers to the resistance of bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites, while **antibiotic resistance** refers specifically to bacterial resistance.<sup>1,3</sup>

**People don't become resistant to antibiotics—it's the bacteria that do.<sup>3</sup>**

### Bacteria

They live all around us, but some can cause infections.<sup>4</sup>

### Resistance

Some bacteria change and can't be killed by antibiotics, and so continue to grow.<sup>4</sup>

### Untreatable infections

Common infections may no longer be treatable if resistance continues to grow.<sup>3</sup>

### Antibiotics

These medicines prevent and treat bacterial infections, work by killing or slowing the growth of bacteria.<sup>3,4</sup>

### Passing resistance

Antibiotic resistant bacteria can multiply and pass resistance to other bacteria.<sup>4</sup>

### Challenge

Resistant infections can spread to new places, extending hospital stays and increasing healthcare costs.<sup>3</sup>

## Antibiotic Resistance happens naturally but misuse of antibiotics speeds it up<sup>3</sup>

Once bacteria become resistant to antibiotics, it becomes much more difficult to get an infection under control.<sup>2</sup> Antibiotic resistance may lead to increased medical expenses, prolonged hospital stays and high risk of mortality.<sup>3</sup>

## What can you do about AMR?\*

Taking antibiotics exactly how they are prescribed is an important way you can protect yourself and your loved ones from antimicrobial resistance.<sup>2</sup> Antibiotics do not work against viruses that cause colds or the flu.<sup>1</sup>

## Remember to...

Follow good hygiene practices to prevent infections and stay healthy: wash hands regularly, cover your mouth and nose while coughing, and stay home when you're sick. For more advice, please talk to your doctor.

## Here's how you can prevent antibiotic resistance:

# 01

Never use antibiotics without a prescription from a healthcare professional<sup>3</sup>

# 02

Always follow your doctor's advice on how to take antibiotics<sup>3,5</sup>

# 03

If you have leftover antibiotics, don't save them to use later or share them with others<sup>3</sup>



# Act Against Antimicrobial Resistance

## Our actions today can impact the future

\*Antivirals, antibiotics, antifungals and antiparasitics are types of antimicrobials.<sup>3</sup>

### References:

1. WHO factsheet. Antimicrobial resistance. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/antimicrobial-resistance>. Accessed November 2023 2. CDC. Antimicrobial Resistance Questions and Answers. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use/antibiotic-resistance.html>. Last accessed: November 2023 3. WHO factsheet. Antibiotic resistance. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/antibiotic-resistance>. Accessed November 2023 4. CDC. Antibiotic Resistance Threats in the United States 2019. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/pdf/threats-report/2019-ar-threats-report-508.pdf>. Accessed November 2023 5. CDC. Antibiotic Prescribing and Use. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use/do-and-dont.html>. Accessed November 2023.

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This initiative is funded and developed by GSK.

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NP-GBL-ACA-PINF-230001 | November 2023



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