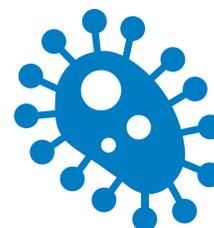




Antibiotics: Too Much of a Good Thing Can Be Bad



Antibiotics are some of the most commonly prescribed drugs and save millions of lives each year. However, overuse and misuse have led to an alarming rise in antibiotic-resistant bacteria that, in the U.S. alone, cause 2 million illnesses and 23,000 deaths each year.



Be safe! *Only take antibiotics that have been prescribed by a medical doctor and filled by a licensed pharmacy, and take all of them as prescribed.*

What You Need to Know

- Antibiotics fight bacterial infections (strep throat, urinary tract infections, whooping cough). Do not take antibiotics for viruses (bronchitis, colds, flu).
- If you buy antibiotics from another country or the Internet, you do not know what you will get.
 - The drugs might have the wrong ingredients or be low quality, too strong, too weak or made and/or stored incorrectly.
 - The people selling the medication may have had little or no training. They may give you the wrong antibiotic for your condition.
- Taking antibiotics incorrectly can cause side effects like allergic reactions, kidney damage, nausea and diarrhea. Also, your infection can become worse, which may cause dangerous complications – even death.
- Overuse of antibiotics or taking them for the wrong reasons can create bacteria that are hard to kill.
- It is important to finish all of the antibiotic that was prescribed. If you stop taking it too soon, two things can happen:
 - It may not have killed all of the bacteria that caused your infection and you can get sick again.
 - The bacteria can become resistant and the antibiotic will not work the next time you need it.

If you do not feel well, seek medical attention!
Do not treat yourself or try to wait it out thinking you'll get better.

