Safe Use of Antibiotics

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Safe Use of Antibiotics

- What are antibiotics?
- Are there any risks of using antibiotics?
- What are antibiotic resistant bacteria (resistant bacteria)?
- Points to note when taking antibiotics
- Frequently asked questions
- Summary

What are Antibiotics?

- Antibiotics are used for treating bacterial infections
- They do not work for viral infections such as a cold or the flu



Are There Any Risks of Using Antibiotics?

- Yes, potential risks include:
 - Side effects and allergic reactions
 - Infections due to resistant bacteria

Side Effects of Antibiotics (1)

- Each type of antibiotic has its specific side effects
- Common symptoms include:
 - Nausea
 - Vomiting
 - Constipation or diarrhoea
 - Headache

Side Effects of Antibiotics (2)

- Allergic reactions
 - Rash
 - Itchiness
 - Breathlessness



 If you have any allergic reaction(s) after taking antibiotics, you should bring the drugs to consult a doctor promptly

What are Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria?

- Bacteria change in ways to become resistant to the antibiotics which they are previously sensitive to
- That is, the previous effective treatment is no longer capable of controlling the same infection
- When the bacteria become resistant to most antibiotics, they are referred to as "superbugs"

Infection due to Resistant Bacteria

- While taking antibiotics, they will also kill the normal bacteria in our body and increase the risk of acquiring more resistant bacteria
- Infections due to resistant bacteria are very difficult to treat
- Posing a significant threat to population health

Points to Note When Taking Antibiotics (1)

- Consult the doctor for using the right drug for the disease
- Follow health professionals' instructions on using antibiotics



Points to Note When Taking Antibiotics (2)

Enhance personal protective measures

- Maintain proper hand hygiene
- Consume food or drinks that are thoroughly cooked or boiled
- Disinfect and cover all wounds properly
- Wear a mask while having respiratory symptoms
- Young children with symptoms of infection should minimise contact with other children











Points to Note When Taking Antibiotics (3)

 Never share antibiotics with other people or store them up for later use



FAQ (1)

- What are the differences between bacteria and virus?
 - Bacteria are tiny organisms that can reproduce independently
 - Viruses are even much smaller than bacteria that can only reproduce inside living cells
 - They have different properties and may cause different diseases

Examples of bacteria and viruses and the diseases they cause:

Germs		Disease example(s)
Bacteria	Escherichia coli (E.coli)	Urinary tract infection
		Diarrhoeal disease
	Streptococcus pneumoniae	Chest infection
		Middle ear infection
	Staphylococcus aureus	Skin and soft tissue infection
Viruses	Rhinovirus	Cold
	Influenza virus, e.g. H1N1, H3N2	Influenza
	Varicella-zoster virus	Chickenpox
	Enterovirus	Hand, foot and mouth disease

FAQ (2)

- Are antibiotics miracle anti-inflammatory drugs that cure all kinds of inflammation?
 - Antibiotics are drugs for treating bacterial infections
 - Anti-inflammatory drug is a general name referring to a group of drugs which can reduce inflammation and relieve pain, such as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs like aspirin. Their actions are different from that of antibiotics
 - If you have query about the drugs you are taking, you should consult your doctor

FAQ (3)

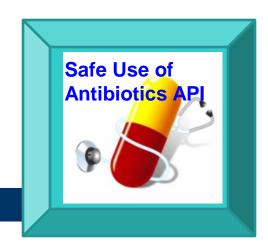
• If I have fever, do I need antibiotics?

- Fever is a common symptom which may or may not be caused by bacteria
- Follow health professionals' instructions on the use of antibiotics
- Do not request antibiotics from your doctor
- Do not self-medicate antibiotics

FAQ (4)

- If I have yellow / green nasal discharge, do I need antibiotics?
 - It is quite normal for the discharge to become thick and change colour during a cold or the flu.
 There may or may not be an associated bacterial infection.
 - Consult your doctor on using antibiotics

Summary



- Antibiotics are used to treat bacterial infections, they do not work for a cold or the flu
- Consult a doctor first,
 let him decide if antibiotics are needed
- Antibiotics kill normal bacteria in our body, increase the chance of acquiring resistant bacteria
- Enhance personal hygiene when taking antibiotics