

A large, dark teal graphic on the left side of the page, consisting of three concentric, semi-circular arcs of varying thicknesses, resembling a stylized 'S' or a series of nested curves.

Antibiotics and Antibiotic Resistance

General information

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This information leaflet is for cancer patients who have been prescribed a course of antibiotics to complete following discharge from hospital, or as an outpatient.

This leaflet will answer some of the questions that patients frequently ask about antibiotic resistance.

To slow down the development of antibiotic resistance, it is important to use antibiotics in the right way. Antibiotics should be taken as prescribed and never saved for later or shared with others.

What is the problem?

Antibiotic resistance is an everyday problem in all healthcare settings. The spread of resistant bacteria in hospitals or community healthcare settings is a major issue for patient safety:

- Infections with antibiotic-resistant bacteria increase levels of disease and death, as well as the length of time people stay in hospitals
- Inappropriate use of antibiotics may increasingly cause patients to become colonised or infected with resistant bacteria
- Few new antibiotics are being developed. As resistance in bacteria grows, it will become more difficult to treat infection, and this affects patient care

What is causing this problem?

The inappropriate use and prescribing of antibiotics is causing the development of resistance.

Inappropriate use includes:

- Not taking your antibiotics as prescribed
- Skipping doses of antibiotics
- Not taking antibiotics at regular intervals
- Saving some for later
- Sharing antibiotics with others

What should you do?

- Always take your antibiotic course as prescribed
- Always finish the course
- Do not share your antibiotic course with anyone else



Who can I speak to if I have further questions?

Please speak to any of the ward staff looking after you, or any of the staff in the outpatient clinics.

You can also speak to the person who prescribes your antibiotics for you (this may be a doctor, a nurse, or another health care professional).

The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre listens confidentially to any comments and complaints so that we can continue to improve our services. You may write to us at the hospital address below or, if you would like to speak to the Antimicrobial Pharmacist, you can contact us directly or your ward/clinic nurse can arrange a meeting.

Antimicrobial Pharmacist

The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust
Clatterbridge Road
Bebington
Wirral
CH63 4JY
Telephone: 0151 556 5865



ANTIBIOTIC GUARDIAN



What is antibiotic resistance?



THE PROBLEM

Antibiotics treat infections by killing bacteria, but now the bacteria are fighting back. Our medicines are becoming less effective which means more deaths and more complications for people receiving treatment in hospital. We have to tackle the problem before it gets worse.



HOW THIS HAPPENED

There are many reasons why antibiotics lose their effectiveness, but here are two key ones:

Firstly, we take medicines that we don't need. Antibiotics don't help most colds or coughs get better but we still request antibiotics for them.

Secondly, we make things worse when we don't take antibiotics exactly as prescribed for instance, missing doses. Never save antibiotics for future use or give them to someone else.



WHAT CAN WE DO?

Antibiotic resistance is one of the biggest threats facing us today but you can help. Please visit www.antibioticguardian.com and find out about simple steps you can take to save our antibiotics.





A world without antibiotics



PRE-ANTIBIOTIC AGE

In a world before antibiotics, as recently as the 1930s, people often died from infections like pneumonia or meningitis. Simple medical procedures/operations were risky due to the chance of infection. Antibiotics changed that.



ANTIBIOTIC AGE

Since the 1940s our antibiotics have allowed us to fight infections and save millions of lives. But they are becoming ineffective against many infections because we aren't using them properly.



POST-ANTIBIOTIC AGE

If bacteria become 'resistant' to our antibiotics many routine treatments will again become increasingly dangerous. Setting broken bones, basic operations, even chemotherapy all rely on access to antibiotics that work. Antibiotic resistance is one of the biggest threats facing us today but we have a chance to fight back. Find out how at: www.antibioticguardian.com

How we produce our information

All of our leaflets are produced by staff at The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre and this information is not sponsored or influenced in any way. Every effort is made to ensure that the information included in this leaflet is accurate and complete and we hope that it will add to any professional advice you have had. All our leaflets are evidence based where appropriate and they are regularly reviewed and updated. If you are concerned about your health in any way, you should consult your healthcare team.

We rely on a number of sources to gather evidence for our information. All of our information is in line with accepted national or international guidelines where possible. Where no guidelines exist, we rely on other reliable sources such as systematic reviews, published clinical trials data or a consensus review of experts. We also use medical textbooks, journals and government publications.

References for this leaflet can be obtained by telephoning 0151 556 5570.

If you need this leaflet in large print, Braille, audio or different language, please call 0151 556 5570.

If you have a comment, concern, compliment or complaint, please call 0151 556 5203.

The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust
Clatterbridge Road, Bebington,
Wirral, CH63 4JY.

Tel: 0151 556 5000

Web: www.clatterbridgecc.nhs.uk

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