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MONTHLY HEALTH MESSAGE

ANTIBIOTIC AWARENESS & ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE.

Superbug threat is 'ticking time bomb'

Antibiotic resistance is an everyday problem in all healthcare settings across England and Europe. 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 colonized 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 can we do??

- Keep ourselves well. Eat healthily. Drink plenty of water. Exercise.
- Good handwashing after using the toilet. Wash hands before meals and snacks.
- Manage coughs and colds at home. Plenty of drinks. Rest (avoid exercise during period of illness). Cough into crux of elbow and NOT hands. Regular paracetamol for first 3-4 days. Wash hands after blowing nose and putting used tissue straight in the bin.
- When prescribed antibiotics by a doctor follow instructions for use and complete the course (taking antibiotics when you don't need them means they are less likely to work in the future when you need them. Most colds and flu are caused by viruses against which antibiotics are NOT effective.)

Professor Davies, has said that "antimicrobial resistance poses a catastrophic threat. If we don't act now, any one of us could go into hospital in 20 years for minor surgery and die because of an ordinary infection that can't be treated by antibiotics. And routine operations like hip replacements or organ transplants could be deadly because of the risk of infection".

MORE INFORMATION ON THE LEAFLET ATTACHED.

ALSO CHECK OUT NHS CHOICES FOR INFORMATION ON ANTIBIOTICS AND OTHER HEALTH RELATED TOPICS.