



News Release

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Columbus Community Hospital reminds community to be antibiotics aware

For Immediate Release

(COLUMBUS, Neb.) – Columbus Community Hospital encourages patients, families and health care professionals to be antibiotics aware by learning about safe antibiotic prescribing and use.

Each year in the United States, at least 2 million people become infected with antibiotic-resistant bacteria, and more than 23,000 die as a result.

Antibiotic resistance, one of the most urgent threats to the public's health, occurs when bacteria no longer respond to the drugs designed to kill them.

Antibiotics are critical tools for treating several common infections, such as pneumonia, and life-threatening conditions, such as sepsis. However, they are only needed for treating certain infections caused by bacteria. They also won't help with some common bacterial infections, including most cases of bronchitis, many sinus infections and some ear infections.

"Any time antibiotics are used, they can cause side effects and lead to antibiotic resistance," said Josh Jaeger, pharmacy director at the hospital. "If antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help, and the side effects could still hurt you."

Common side effects range from rashes and yeast infections to severe health problems like Clostridium difficile infection (also called C. difficile or C. diff), which causes diarrhea that can lead to severe colon damage and death. If you need antibiotics, take them exactly as prescribed.

"Patients and families can talk to their health care professional if they have any questions about their antibiotics," Jaeger said. "They should also seek help if they develop side effects — especially diarrhea, since that could be C. difficile, which needs to be treated."

Antibiotics do not work on viruses, such as colds and flu, or runny noses, even if the mucus is thick, yellow or green. Respiratory viruses usually go away in a week or two without treatment.



Patients and families can ask their health care professional about the best way to feel better while their body fights off the virus.

“We can all stay healthy and keep others healthy by cleaning our hands, covering our coughs, staying home when sick, and getting recommended vaccines,” said Jaeger.

Antibiotics save lives. When a patient needs antibiotics, the benefits outweigh the risks of side effects and antibiotic resistance. Improving the way we take antibiotics helps keep us healthy now, helps fight antibiotic resistance, and ensures that life-saving antibiotics will be available for future generations.

To learn more about antibiotic prescribing and use, visit www.columbushosp.org.

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