

# Antibiotic Guardian – European Antibiotic Awareness Day

18 Nov 2014

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### **Public Health England launches the Antibiotic Guardian initiative, providing UK support for the European Antibiotic Awareness Day.**

The campaign was launched to kick-start collective action from both healthcare professionals and members of the public to work together to slow the spread of antibiotic resistance.

By pledging to become an Antibiotic Guardian you choose to perform a simple action which protects antibiotics against the threat of antibiotic resistance.

#### *What can I do?*

- Don't ask for antibiotics, treat your cold and flu symptoms with pharmacist advice and over the counter medicines
- Take antibiotics exactly as prescribed, never save them for later, never share them with others
- Spread the word, tell your friends and family about antibiotic resistance

*Pledge your support:*

[AntibioticGuardian.com](http://AntibioticGuardian.com)



## 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 this 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](http://www.antibioticguardian.com) and find out about simple steps you can take to save our antibiotics.



# Antibiotic resistance in numbers

# 25k

The number of people who die each year across Europe from infections resistant to antibiotics

A recent study showed that the likelihood of GPs prescribing antibiotics for coughs & colds increased by 40% between 1999-2011

# 40%

# 30 years

The period of time since a new class of antibiotics was last introduced despite the fact that growing numbers of infections are resistant to antibiotics

Research has shown that only 10% of sore throats and 20% of acute sinusitis benefit from antibiotic treatment but the prescription rates are much higher than this

# 10%



# €1.5 billion

Annual EU wide cost of healthcare expenses and lost productivity due to antibiotic resistant bacteria

 **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](http://www.antibioticguardian.com)

Become an Antibiotic Guardian by pledging your support at:

[AntibioticGuardian.com](http://AntibioticGuardian.com)

UK Government's European Antibiotic Awareness Day 2014 resources:

[gov.uk/government/collections/european-antibiotic-awareness-day-resources](http://gov.uk/government/collections/european-antibiotic-awareness-day-resources)

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control information and resources:

[ECDC.Europa.eu/en/EAAD](http://ECDC.Europa.eu/en/EAAD)