

# European Antibiotic Awareness Day 2014

18 Nov 2014

**It has long been acknowledged that antibiotic resistance is a serious threat to human health; Antibiotic Awareness Day on November 18th acknowledges that we are at risk of reverting to a time when a simple cut could prove deadly.**

Over 25,000 people die in the EU each year because antibiotics are no longer effective. In July this year David Cameron commissioned internationally renowned economist Jim O'Neill to review the economic impact of antibiotic resistance on the UK. In September, meanwhile, President Barack Obama signed an Executive Order directing key federal departments and agencies to take action to combat the rise of antibiotic-resistant bacteria in the USA.

It's a burgeoning crisis that's close to the heart of Dr Neil Murray, the CEO of Redx Pharma, parent company of Redx Anti-Infectives, the largest UK biotech working to tackle the challenge of drug-resistant infectious diseases.

Dr Murray said: We welcome the focus of attention on this issue which European Antibiotic Awareness Day prompts. This is a critical time for assessing how we deal with this critical threat and greater awareness about the issue is a key part of the battle to tackle antibiotic resistance.

Antibiotic resistance is the key health challenge for our generation. Although the disease of the moment is Ebola, antibiotic resistance is actually a much more pervasive and profound global threat to both human and animal health.

We're at risk of heading back to a 19th century-like era when a simple cut could lead to an infection that could kill you. Even though we're making great strides in creating drugs that tackle really challenging, complicated diseases like cancer, the benefits of these advancements won't be achieved if patients start dying from simple infections which have become untreatable.

Nature is unfortunately well ahead of all of us in terms of the ability of bacteria to become resistant to drugs. Increasingly, bacteria and other disease-causing microorganisms are becoming resistant to the drugs that we have available. The production of only two new classes of antibiotics in the last 50 years is part of a complex and serious problem. We are in a race against time to develop new drugs and the industry accepts it needs to restock the pipeline from both industrial and academic sources. There are many associated problems relating to prescribing

habits, business models and regulation but it is a simple fact that we need more drugs.

Redx scientists have successfully applied the company's proprietary Redox Switch™ approach in the area of infectious disease to generate a pipeline of novel antibacterials.

We're seeing real success with new drugs coming from our research tackling both Gram positive and Gram negative bacteria, says Dr Murray. These drugs have the potential to be the first new class of antibiotics in a generation and we expect to have our first clinical trials underway in early 2016.

Speaking in support of EAAD at Redx's Alderley Park headquarters in North West England, Redx founder Dr Peter Jackson said: The AMR problem is clear and the Prime Minister has taken the lead in Europe: We now have the ideal opportunity for public, private and voluntary organisations to come together to understand the spread of resistant infection, preserve for as long as possible the current drugs that still work and create the next generation of innovative medicines that will be needed to keep patients safe and healthy. It's time to take the urgent next steps to tackle the resistance threat together. It's time for action on AMR.



Dr Neil Murray speaking about antibiotic resistance at the BioInfect 2013 conference

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Antibiotic resistance is one of the biggest threats facing us today. Find out about Public Health England's 2014 initiative:

[Antibiotic Guardian](#)

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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)