



Use antibiotics
responsibly
& only under
medical supervision

**Antibiotic Misuse
Risks Lives!**

Background

The discovery of antibiotics marked one of the greatest medical advances in history, dramatically extending life expectancy. Today, it can be difficult to imagine what our lives would be like without antibiotics, yet a return to those dark days is a **very real threat**. If we do not work together and take urgent steps to ensure the proper, responsible use of antibiotics, that threat can become reality, as vital treatments will no longer be able to protect us by effectively eliminating harmful bacteria.

This threat is known as **antibiotic resistance**.

Antibiotic resistance is when bacteria develop the ability to protect themselves against a certain type of antibiotic. This means that the antibiotic is no longer able to harm the resistant bacteria and cannot treat the bacterial infection. In the case of contagious diseases, other people may then become infected with the new strain of resistant bacteria and be faced with the problem of ineffective antibiotic treatments.

Antibiotic resistant bacteria are increasing and becoming more widespread due to the improper, unnecessary, and excess use of antibiotics. A common example is the use of antibiotics to treat viral infections, like colds or the flu – a use that will not resolve any health problems and may even cause them. In addition to the risk of developing antibiotic resistant bacteria, each antibiotic treatment has side effects, so it is always important to use them properly and responsibly, and only according to your doctor's instructions.

The World Health Organization and Israeli Ministry of Health have declared antibiotic resistance a global crisis that requires immediate action.

We must work together to protect antibiotics, so they can protect us from dangerous bacterial diseases!

How can we ensure responsible antibiotic use and combat the rise of antibiotic resistance?

- ✓ Only take antibiotics when prescribed by your doctor, making sure you follow the instructions regarding how much you should take and for how long.
- ✓ Consult your family doctor about recommended vaccinations that can protect you from infections.
- ✓ Take care to regularly wash your hands with soap and water to prevent the spread of harmful microorganisms.
- ✓ Dispose of unused or out of date antibiotics in the designated bin found in pharmacies.
- ✓ Don't take antibiotics for viral infections like colds and the flu.
- ✓ Don't save leftover antibiotics for "next time".
- ✓ Don't take antibiotics that have been prescribed for someone else.

Remember!

- ! Antibiotics are only effective against infections caused by bacteria.
- ! Antibiotics do not work against infections caused by viruses, and can even endanger your health when taken unnecessarily.
- ! Misuse of antibiotics has an overall negative effect on your health, causing side effects and leading to the development of antibiotic resistant bacteria.



**And, most importantly,
stay safe & healthy!**

Maccabi Healthcare Services

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