

HOT TOPIC

ANTIBIOTIC AWARENESS WEEK: NOV. 13 THROUGH 19, 2017

LEARN MORE ABOUT APPROPRIATE ANTIBIOTIC USE

Highmark recently announced on the Provider Resource Center that Nov. 13 through 19, 2017, is Antibiotic Awareness week. To expand on this important topic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [campaign](#) is aimed at educating and bringing awareness to appropriate antibiotic use. Antibiotics save lives, but they aren't always the answer – they don't work on viruses, and continual antibiotic use enables bacteria to develop resistance to the medications.

Each year in the U.S., at least 2 million people are infected with antibiotic-resistant bacteria and at least 23,000 people die as a result.¹ It is important to be an advocate of appropriate antibiotic use and help increase awareness around proper use of antibiotics.

Charles DeShazer, MD, senior vice president and chief medical officer, Highmark, stated, "Antibiotics are an essential part of modern medical treatment. Like all good things, antibiotics must be used in moderation. They won't stop viruses. They won't help colds. Major professional societies, like the American College of Physicians, recommend that people with simple sinus infections, sore throats, or bronchitis get better with simple treatments and do not need antibiotics to get better."

Improving the way we take antibiotics can help slow antibiotic-resistance and ensure that life-saving antibiotics will work when needed most and be available for future generations.

"Inappropriate antibiotic prescribing leads to resistant bacteria, making treatment of serious infections much more difficult. People can develop allergies to antibiotics. Others may develop diarrhea or other complications — why risk these complications when avoidance of inappropriate antibiotics can prevent them?" Dr. DeShazer concluded.

Improving antibiotic use: Please visit the CDC website for information on appropriate [antibiotic use](#).

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/index.html>