

Press Release

Tuesday 3 March 2020

Be antibiotics aware this winter

People in Worcestershire are being encouraged by local GPs to be antibiotics aware this winter and understand that they are unlikely to be the remedy for their coughs, colds and sore throats.

Antibiotics are used to treat or prevent some types of bacterial infection, and they work by killing bacteria or preventing them from reproducing and spreading.

They are not effective against viral infections such as the common cold and flu, as well as most coughs and sore throats that circulate at this time of year.

By being antibiotics aware, people can do their bit to help the prevention of 'antibiotic resistance', where bacteria adapt and find ways to survive the effects of an antibiotic.

The more we use antibiotics, the greater the chance bacteria will become resistant to them and they can no longer be used to treat infections, so its vital antibiotics are used only in the right way, as prescribed by a doctor.

Dr Carl Ellson, Strategic Clinical Lead for the three Worcestershire CCGs, said: "Many people wrongly assume that antibiotics are a cure-all remedy for their winter illness, but they have no effect on colds, flu and the majority of coughs and sore throats.

"The more we use antibiotics, the less effective they become, so it's essential that we use them sensibly. We can all do our bit to limit antibiotic resistance, and you can play your part by not expecting your GP to prescribe antibiotics to make your minor winter illness better.

"A pharmacist may be able to recommend over-the-counter remedies to ease the symptoms of winter illness, so visit your local pharmacy for advice if you're feeling under the weather."

When prescribed antibiotics, it's important to follow your GPs instructions carefully, improper use can help bacteria to develop resistance to antibiotics.

Never skip doses of antibiotics, save some for later or stop taking them before your course is finished, because even if you're feeling better there may still be bacteria in your system which can mutate and become resistant.

You should never share your antibiotics with anyone else either as you don't know their medical history.

To find out more about antibiotics go to www.nhs.uk/antibiotics

Notes to editors:

Sent on behalf of:

NHS Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG, NHS South Worcestershire CCG and NHS Wyre Forest CCG

- For more information about NHS Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG Clinical Commissioning Group please visit: www.redditchandbromsgroveccg.nhs.uk
- For more information about NHS South Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group please visit: www.southworcsccg.nhs.uk
- For more information about NHS Wyre Forest Clinical Commissioning Group please visit: www.wyreforestccg.nhs.uk

For further information please contact:

- Dani Hopley, Communications Manager on 01905 681978 or email D.hopley@nhs.net

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