

Jackson County Department of Public Health

Melissa McKnight
Deputy Health Director
828-587-8288

2018-57
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 2, 2018

BE ANTIBIOTIC AWARE: SMART USE, BEST CARE

Antibiotics save lives and are important tools for treating a number of common bacterial infections. Nonetheless, at least 30% of the antibiotics used in outpatient settings in the United States are prescribed when they aren't needed. Unnecessary use of antibiotics can lead to antibiotic resistance, one of the most urgent public health threats. This resistance happens when bacteria develop the ability to defeat the drug designed to kill them. Annually in the US, at least 2 million people become infected with bacteria that are antibiotic-resistant and around 23,000 die as a result.

Due to these alarming statistics, the Jackson County Department of Public Health (JCDPH) wants to take time to remind our community of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's annual campaign, "Be Antibiotics Aware: Smart Use, Best Care." During Antibiotic Awareness Week, November 12-18, take time to follow these eight ways to stay antibiotic aware:

- Remember that antibiotics save lives but they aren't always the answer when you are sick.
- Antibiotics do not work on viruses (Ex: colds, flu).
- Antibiotics are only needed for treating certain infections caused by bacteria (Ex: strep throat, E.coli).
- An antibiotic will not make you feel better if you have a virus.
- Any time antibiotics are used, they can cause side effects.
- Taking antibiotics creates resistant bacteria.
- If you need antibiotics, take them exactly as prescribed.
- Stay healthy: Clean your hands, cover coughs, and get vaccinated!

For questions about antibiotic resistance, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use/index.html> or call JCDPH at 828-586-8994.

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