

*Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2020*

**Message on Antibiotic Awareness Week**

*November 18, 2020*

When safely and appropriately prescribed, antibiotics are critical tools used to save lives in the United States and around the world. During Antibiotic Awareness Week, we reaffirm our commitment to responsible antibiotic stewardship and acknowledge the contributions of American medical professionals.

Antibiotics play a powerful role in modern medicine. They are instrumental in treating countless Americans with serious bacterial infections and preventing infection among others who are at risk. Over the years, however, antibiotics have been overprescribed and overused. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), at least 47 million antibiotic prescriptions are written needlessly every year. This practice can lead to harmful side effects for patients from these drugs and an overall decrease in long-term effectiveness of antibiotics with the potential to drive the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

Overuse of antibiotics can be deadly. Each year, there are more than 2.8 million antibiotic-resistant infections, resulting in more than 35,000 deaths in our country. In addition, there were 223,900 hospitalized cases of *Clostridioides difficile*, a pathogen that is driven by antibiotic use, in 2017, which killed at least 12,800 people. Addressing the threat of antibiotic overuse is a public health priority. Fortunately, our efforts have shown promising results. Since 2013, deaths attributable to antibiotic resistance have fallen 18 percent.

My administration has taken several steps to build on this progress. In March, I signed a memorandum reestablishing the Presidential Advisory Council on Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria to develop a comprehensive approach for infection prevention and control. In October, agencies across the United States Government joined together for the release of the new National Action Plan for Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria, which lays out the next 5 years of aggressive actions the United States will take to combat antibiotic resistance. As part of this effort, CDC's Antibiotic Resistance Solutions Initiative is ensuring adequate educational resources on infection prevention and control and antibiotic stewardship are available to health care professionals and the public while encouraging advanced research to guarantee the right antibiotic is used at the right time, dose, and duration.

During Antibiotic Awareness Week, we urge all Americans to be good stewards of this critical resource and commit to supporting the discovery of new therapeutic strategies and evidence-based prescribing practices to slow the emergence of antibiotic-resistant bacteria in humans, plants, and animals.

*Categories:* Letters and Messages : Antibiotic Awareness Week, message.

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