



## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## IDPH Precious Drugs & Scary Bugs Campaign

*Fight Antibiotic Misuse - Get Smart About Antibiotics Week - November 16-22, 2015*

**SPRINGFIELD** - Antibiotics are among the most commonly prescribed drugs. However, up to 50 percent of all antibiotics prescribed are not needed or are not effective as prescribed.

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is leading the Illinois Precious Drugs & Scary Bugs campaign to promote the appropriate use of antibiotics. The goals are to increase health care provider and patient knowledge about the harms of inappropriate antibiotic use and support clinicians in improving antibiotic prescribing, particularly for acute respiratory infections.

“Not only are antibiotic resistant bacterial infections becoming more common, many bacteria are becoming resistant to more than one type of antibiotic,” said IDPH Director Nirav D. Shah, M.D., J.D. “The Precious Drugs & Scary Bugs campaign involves partnerships among health care systems, professional associations, health care plans, and other stakeholders across the state to eliminate inappropriate use of antibiotics.”

Antibiotic resistance occurs when bacteria change in a way that reduces or eliminates the effectiveness of antibiotics. Inappropriate antibiotic prescribing drives the evolution of bacteria resistant to antibiotics and undermines the ability to treat common infectious diseases. Each year in the United States, at least two million people become infected with bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics and at least 23,000 die as a direct result of these infections. Many more people die from other conditions that are complicated by an antibiotic-resistant infection.

Get Smart About Antibiotics Week is an annual observance to raise awareness of antibiotic resistance and the importance of appropriate antibiotic use. IDPH urges outpatient health care professionals to make a commitment to the safe prescription and use of antibiotics, and to sign up for the [Precious Drugs & Scary Bugs Campaign](#).

What you can do:

- Ask your health care provider if there are other steps you can take to feel better without using an antibiotic. Sometimes the best treatment may be relieving your symptoms.
- Take the antibiotic exactly as your health care provider prescribes. Never skip doses or stop taking an antibiotic early unless your health care provider tells you to do so.

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- Only take antibiotics prescribed for you; do not share or use leftover antibiotics.
- Never save antibiotics for the next time you become sick.
- Do not take antibiotics prescribed for someone else.
- Do not ask for antibiotics when your health care provider thinks you do not need them. Antibiotics have side effects. When your health care provider says you don't need an antibiotic, taking one may do more harm than good.

Antibiotics only fight infections caused by bacteria. Antibiotics will NOT help you feel better if you have a viral infection like a cold or the flu. To test your knowledge about antibiotics, take a quiz [here](http://www.cdc.gov/getsmart/community/about/quiz.html) - <http://www.cdc.gov/getsmart/community/about/quiz.html>.

Information about the [Precious Drugs & Scary Bugs](#) campaign can be found on the IDPH website, [www.dph.illinois.gov](http://www.dph.illinois.gov), and additional information about [antibiotic use and resistance](#) can be found on the CDC website, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

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