

ANTIBIOTIC OR NO ANTIBIOTIC; MYTHS AROUND MEDICINE

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Antimicrobials are medicines used to treat infections caused by various microorganisms. Antibacterials, or antibiotics target bacteria; antivirals target viruses; antifungals target fungi; and antiparasitics target parasites, Antibiotics can be classified into three main types: narrow-spectrum, broad-spectrum, and extended-spectrum. Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) occurs when microbes develop mechanisms to evade the antimicrobials and rendering them ineffective. In countries like India, the situation is worsened by irrational antibiotic prescriptions, over-the-counter availability, and self-medication without a prescription. Addressing AMR requires a multi-faceted approach. Governments, healthcare providers, and the public must work together to promote the rational use of antibiotics. This includes implementing stringent regulations on the sale and use of antibiotics, promoting antimicrobial stewardship programs, and investing in research and development of new antibiotics and alternative therapies. There are many misconceptions about antibiotic use. Most of us believe antibiotics are a cure-all for any illness, that it's safe to stop taking antibiotics as soon as you feel better, or that antibiotics can be used without a prescription. These myths contribute to the misuse of antibiotics and the rise of superbugs. We can do much more than we think. Practicing healthy habits such as proper hand washing, regular vaccination, timely doctor visits, and eating a nutritious diet can help prevent infections. When we do get sick, it's crucial to follow the doctor's prescription carefully, complete the full course of antibiotics, and avoid self-medication.
