

29 November 2012

**DOH-FDA Advisory**  
No. 2012- 017

**Subject: ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE**

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is the ability of microorganisms that cause disease to withstand attack by antimicrobial medicines. The WHO estimates that, globally, about 440,000 new cases of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) emerge annually, causing at least 150,000 deaths. **(WHO AMR March 2012 data)**

The prevalent infections in the country to which antimicrobial resistance has steadily grown and has emerged as priority public concerns are: Multi-drug resistant tuberculosis pneumonia, HIV-AIDS, malaria, MRSA (Methicillin resistant Staphylococcus Aureus) and influenza. Streptococcus pneumonia and Haemophilus influenza are the two of the most common pathogens causing pneumonia and account for more than half of deaths in children below 5 years of age. **(WHO report 2011)**

Antimicrobial resistance occurs when a drug's effectiveness given to cure the infection is reduced or eliminated. It happens when people abuse or misuse antibiotics indiscriminately. This ultimately leads to bacterial alteration or mutation which causes it to be stronger against antibiotics, consequently, resistant to the drug.

A common cause of antimicrobial resistance is self- medication or the patient buying the antibiotic drug, the drug store dispenses the same without a doctor's prescription and the patients, thereafter, administering the drug themselves without any physician's supervision. Another common cause of antimicrobial resistance is failure to complete the prescribed course of treatment or taking incomplete doses of the medicine. This allows the bacteria to generate a stronger "self" that can resist or fight off the drug's effect. Other causes of resistance are substandard medicines, irrational prescriptions, and poor infection prevention and control.

Diverse bacterial infection requires different antibiotics which a health professional like a doctor can advise and supervise. On the other hand, the dispensing of antibiotics or other ethical drugs is the responsibility of a registered pharmacist under the employ of the drug store. The selling or dispensing of antibiotics or other ethical drugs without the required prescription issued by a licensed physician is strictly prohibited.



Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Health  
**FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION**



The public is, therefore, enjoined to report to FDA, either in writing or through telephone call at these numbers: 807-8275, 842-5606, any drug store dispensing antibiotics without the correct prescription and/or selling suspected counterfeit antibiotics and other drugs, for immediate regulatory action. Further, the public is advised to complete the prescribed course of treatment or take the complete doses of the medicine. On the other hand, drugstores, as part of their social responsibility by helping prevent anti-microbial resistance, as well as, avoid prosecution, are strictly enjoined not to dispense antibiotics or other ethical drugs without the written prescription issued by a licensed physician.

  
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