

What is my role in promoting antimicrobial stewardship?

Only take antibiotics when necessary.

- Remind your healthcare provider you only want to take antibiotics and other antimicrobials if appropriate for your condition.
- If you are not sure why you have been prescribed an antimicrobial, ask questions.

Preventing infections is your best defense against unnecessary antimicrobial use.

- Practice hand hygiene - wash hands carefully and regularly.
- Cover your mouth when you cough.
- Stay home if you feel sick, and stay away from others who may be sick.
- Ensure your recommended vaccines are up to date from your doctor's office or pharmacy.

Do not share your antibiotics with others or save them for later.

Do not take antibiotics prescribed for someone else.

If you have questions related to your current antimicrobial therapies, you may contact a member of the antimicrobial stewardship team by calling

(251) 435-7186

on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

or emailing

ASPRX@infirmaryhealth.org



A Patient's Guide to Antimicrobial Stewardship



Infirmiry Health has a system-wide antimicrobial stewardship program made of pharmacists, physicians and other healthcare professionals that work behind the scenes to ensure:

- The most effective medicine for your condition, with the least side effects
- The ideal length of time you need to take the medication to get healthy. Excess treatment may lead to complications, unnecessary cost and contribute to the drugs losing effectiveness in the future (resistance)
- The correct amount of drug for your body and condition
- Whether it is safe for you to receive antimicrobials by mouth instead of intravenous (IV)
- Whether you need antibiotics at all - not all bacteria or fungi need treating if they are not causing problems. The bacteria normally living in and on our body play a vital role in our overall health by supporting our immune system, digestion, metabolism, mental health and more

Common Questions

What are Antimicrobials?

Antimicrobials are a group of drugs that kill bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites. Infirmiry Health's antimicrobial stewardship program ensures that patients get the right drug, at the right dose, for the right length of time, to help ensure optimal treatment while avoiding side effects. These efforts help reduce unnecessary antibiotic use, thus decreasing the spread of antimicrobial-resistant infections.

Are antibiotics the same as antimicrobials?

Antibiotics are a type of antimicrobial. Each different type of germ has a different type of drug that will treat it. "Antimicrobials" consist of antibiotics (bacteria), antivirals (viruses), antifungals (fungi) and antiparasitics (parasites).

What is antimicrobial stewardship?

Stewardship means carefully managing a valuable, limited resource. Antimicrobials are one such resource.

The goal of antimicrobial stewardship is to optimize the treatment of infections for the best possible outcomes, while also working to preserve their usefulness in modern medicine. Antimicrobial stewardship works in ways that are ethical, accountable and responsible, both to individual patients and society.

What is antimicrobial resistance?

Each time a person takes an antimicrobial, there is a chance for the germ to change itself. These changes allow it to survive when faced with a medicine that would normally kill it. When this happens, the germ may become resistant to certain antimicrobials and prescribers are left with limited options to treat the infection. The goal of these programs are to prevent this from happening and slow the spread.

What are common side effects of antimicrobials?

Common side effects of antibiotics can include:



Rash



Dizziness



Nausea



Yeast Infections



Diarrhea