

## USEFUL LINKS

- [21<sup>st</sup> February, 2011 – Tackling Drug Resistance.](#)
- [Hospital Epidemiology and Guidelines for Prevention of Antimicrobial Resistance in Hospitals](#)

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## ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE



**What are Microbes?** – Micro organisms that are too minute to be seen with the naked eye, such as bacteria, viruses, fungi etc. These can only be viewed with a microscope.

**What are Anti-microbials?** – Antimicrobial is a general term given to substances including medicines that kill or slow the growth of microbes.

Examples of antimicrobial agents:

- Tetracycline (one antibiotic used to treat urinary tract infections )
- Ampiclox
- Ketoconazole

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is resistance of a microorganism to an antimicrobial drug to which it was previously sensitive. Resistant organisms (they include bacteria, viruses and some parasites) are able to withstand attack by antimicrobial drugs, such as antibiotics, antivirals, and antimalarials, thereby diminishing our ability to treat and control the spread of infections. Indeed, antibiotic resistance increasingly compromises the outcome of many infections that were, until recently, treatable and remain the most common diseases in Africa.

## Controlling the Resistance

As a patient,

- You must strictly follow directions for prescribed drugs and never take medicine that was prescribed for someone else.
- Ensure that you communicate effectively with your doctor, so that he or she has a clear understanding of your symptoms to be able to determine the best treatment for you.
- Take all of the drugs as prescribed by your healthcare provider.
- Do not share your medication with another person.

Finally, maintaining healthy lifestyle habits always go far in preventing illness. These include proper diet, exercise, sleeping patterns, and good hygiene.

## Key Facts

- Infections caused by resistant microorganisms often fail to respond to conventional treatment, resulting in prolonged illness and greater risk of death.
- A high percentage of hospital-acquired infections are caused by highly resistant bacteria such as methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA).
- Inappropriate and irrational use of antimicrobial medicines provides favourable conditions for resistant microorganisms to emerge, spread and persist.
- Optimal selection, dose and duration of treatment, as well as control of antibiotic use, will prevent or slow the emergence of resistance among micro organism.