

**U.S. ANTIBIOTIC  
AWARENESS WEEK**  
November 18–24, 2019  
[www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use](http://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use)



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is urging healthcare professionals to prescribe antibiotics only when necessary to help fight antibiotic resistance and to protect their patients from antibiotic adverse events. During the month of November including U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week and throughout the year, VA TVHS promotes *Be Antibiotics Aware*, an educational effort to raise awareness about the importance of safe antibiotic prescribing and use.

<https://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use/index.html>

**Healthcare Providers Can:**

- **Prescribe correctly.** Avoid treating viral syndromes with antibiotics, even when patients ask for them.
  - **Pay attention to dose and duration.** The right antibiotic needs to be prescribed at the right dose for the right duration.
  - **Be aware of antibiotic-resistance patterns** in your area so that you can always choose the right antibiotic.
  - Hospital and nursing home providers should **reassess within 48-72 hours of starting** the antibiotic, when the patient's culture results come back. Adjust the prescription if necessary. Stop the prescription if indicated.
- **Talk to your patients** about appropriate use of antibiotics.

### **Pharmacists Can:**

- **Ensure** appropriate antibiotic use evaluating indication, drug-drug interactions, dose and duration.
- **Maintain** awareness of ongoing antibiotic shortages and communicate to providers.
- **Educate** patients on adverse events, appropriate use, and need for compliance.

### **Nurses Can:**

- **Ensure** appropriate collection of cultures and follow infection control practices.
- **Educate** patients on antibiotics, monitor for adverse events, facilitate intravenous to oral (i.e. IV to PO) conversion, and monitor for excessive durations.

### **Everyone Can:**

- **Stop the spread!** Follow hand hygiene and other infection control measures with every patient.
- **Get Vaccinated! VHA Directive 1192 requires all employees receive a seasonal flu shot by Nov. 30.**

**If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Dr. Todd Hulgan and the TVHS Antimicrobial Stewardship Program.**

### **More information:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use/week/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use/week/pdfs/USAAW-Observance-Week-508.pdf>

<https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2020/11/18/default-calendar/world-antimicrobial-awareness-week-2020>