

November 20, 2013

Join the fight against Antibiotic Resistance

Staff at Camden and Campbelltown Hospitals are encouraging the community to fight antibiotic resistance this Antibiotic Awareness Week (November 18-24) by learning how to take antibiotics correctly.

The World Health Organisation says the misuse of antibiotics is one of the most pressing global threats to public health today, and needs to be urgently addressed.

A/Director of Pharmacy at Camden and Campbelltown Hospitals, Herbert Down, says the misuse of antibiotics is making it harder to treat infections in some people.

“You might also be at an increased risk of having complications of the infection, and also of passing the infection onto others,” he said.

“Antibiotic resistance happens when bacteria change to protect themselves from an antibiotic. They are then no longer sensitive to that antibiotic.

“When this happens, antibiotics that previously would have killed the bacteria, or stopped them from multiplying, no longer work.

“More and more bacteria are building up resistance to the infection-fighting power of antibiotics, which means more and more infections may simply become untreatable,” he said.

Mr Down says everyone can help join the fight against antibiotic resistance by using antibiotics appropriately, and acting on these simple steps:

- Antibiotics only kill bacteria, not viral infections like colds and flu
- If you are given antibiotics take them exactly as prescribed and don't skip doses
- Complete the full course of the treatment
- Never share or use leftover antibiotics

“Remember that antibiotics treat specific types of bacterial infections. Taking the wrong ones could delay treatment, and allow those more pesky bacteria to become even stronger and multiply further,” Mr Down said.

As with all medications, it is important you seek advice from your pharmacist before taking anything.