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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Established in 1945, DuPage County Health Department promotes physical and emotional health; prevents illness injury and disability; protects health from environmental risk factors, and strives to assure the provision of accessible, quality service.

## DuPage County Health Department Advises Patients and Their Families to Be Antibiotics Aware

**DUPAGE COUNTY**—Kicking off U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week November 18-24, DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) joins the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in advising patients and their families to use antibiotics only when necessary to reduce antibiotic resistance, help stop the spread of superbugs, and protect patients from side effects from antibiotics. During U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week and beyond, CDC and partners promote *Be Antibiotics Aware*, an educational effort to raise awareness about the importance of safe antibiotic use.



The *Be Antibiotics Aware* initiative educates the public about when antibiotics are needed, when they are not, how to take antibiotics appropriately, and potential side effects of antibiotics.

Patients and their families are advised to use antibiotics only when necessary to reduce antibiotic resistance, help stop the spread of superbugs, and protect patients from side effects from antibiotics.

The CDC encourages everyone to:

- Know the facts about antibiotics.
  - Antibiotics can save lives when a patient needs them.
  - Antibiotics do NOT treat viruses, like those that cause colds, flu, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), or COVID-19.
  - Antibiotics are only needed for treating certain infections caused by bacteria.
  - When antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help you, and the side effects could still cause harm.

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- Ask your healthcare provider about the most appropriate treatment for you or your loved ones' illness.
  - If antibiotics are not needed, ask about the best way to feel better while your body fights off the virus.
  - Take antibiotics exactly as prescribed if they are needed.
- Talk with your healthcare provider if you have any questions about your antibiotic or develop any side effects, especially severe diarrhea.
- Do your best to stay healthy and keep others healthy by:
  - cleaning your hands by washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol,
  - covering your coughs and sneezes with a tissue,
  - staying home when sick,
  - seeking medical care if your symptoms persist/worsen, and
  - getting recommended vaccines, such as the flu and COVID-19 vaccines.

Antibiotics aren't always the answer. Everyone can help improve antibiotic use. Improving the way we take antibiotics helps keep us healthy now, helps fight antimicrobial resistance, and ensures that these life-saving antibiotics will be available for future generations. Patients, families, and healthcare professionals are encouraged to use the educational resources and learn more about *Be Antibiotics Aware* by visiting: [www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use/](http://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use/).

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