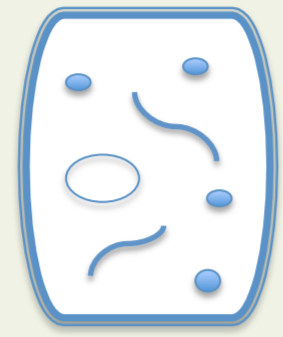




Antibiotics and Antibiotic Resistance

What Do Antibiotics Actually Do?

Bacteria are tiny little cells. They protect themselves with a strong shell called the 'cell wall'



Antibiotics work by killing bacteria or stopping them grow



They do this by targeting and breaking down the shell and / or destroying their content



Viruses are much smaller and work in a very different way. They don't have a 'cell wall'.

Antibiotics simply cannot affect a virus.

The Antibiotic Problem

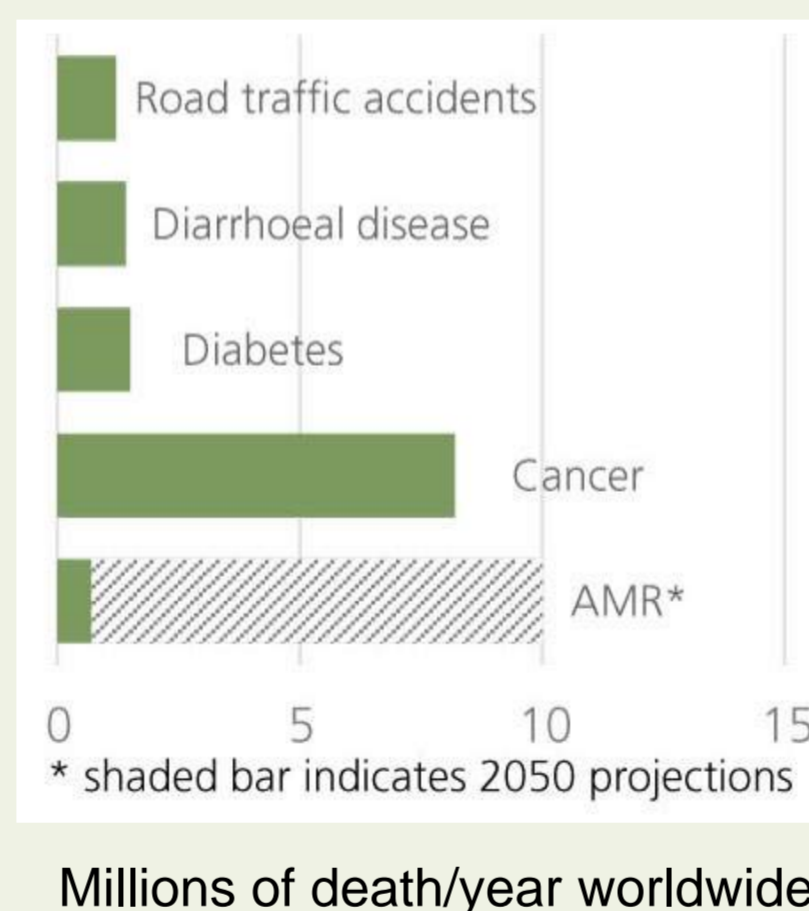


Bacteria are tiny and many! Hundreds of thousands can fit into this full stop .

By chance, a few of these bacteria will be resistant to our antibiotics. When we use antibiotics we kill the 'sensitive' bacteria, but allow the few harder resistant ones to multiply and spread.

Infection by resistant bacteria is difficult to treat and more likely to develop into a serious illness.

The World Health Organisation believe that by 2050 harm caused by Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) will affect more people than many other illnesses.



Did you know?

In some parts of London, we have to send people to hospital with simple urine infections, as there are no longer any effective antibiotics we can give to treat them at home!

Did you know?

The first antibiotic - penicillin - was found in 1928. We have not discovered any major new antibiotics in the last 30 years!



What Can We Do?

- Complete the full course of antibiotic as prescribed, don't stop when you are feeling better. If the antibiotics give you side effects, discuss this with the Doctor
- Don't use antibiotics unnecessarily. Research shows only 10% of sore throats are due to bacteria.
- Don't store antibiotics for later
- Don't borrow a few from a friend or relative. They may not be the right one for your infection.
- For more info visit: <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/ARC/Pages/AboutARC.aspx>