Community Care

Protect with Antimicrobial Stewardship

What is Antimicrobial Stewardship?

Antimicrobial stewardship (AMS) is a term developed to assist you in getting the correct antimicrobials and minimising the chances of developing resistance to the drugs in the future.

Those who play an important role in AMS is you, your family and your representatives, including your aged care provider (that is us at Southcare), nurses, doctors and your pharmacist.

What is an infection?

Infections can make us unwell; they are caused by little bugs known as bacteria, viruses, fungus or parasites in our body.

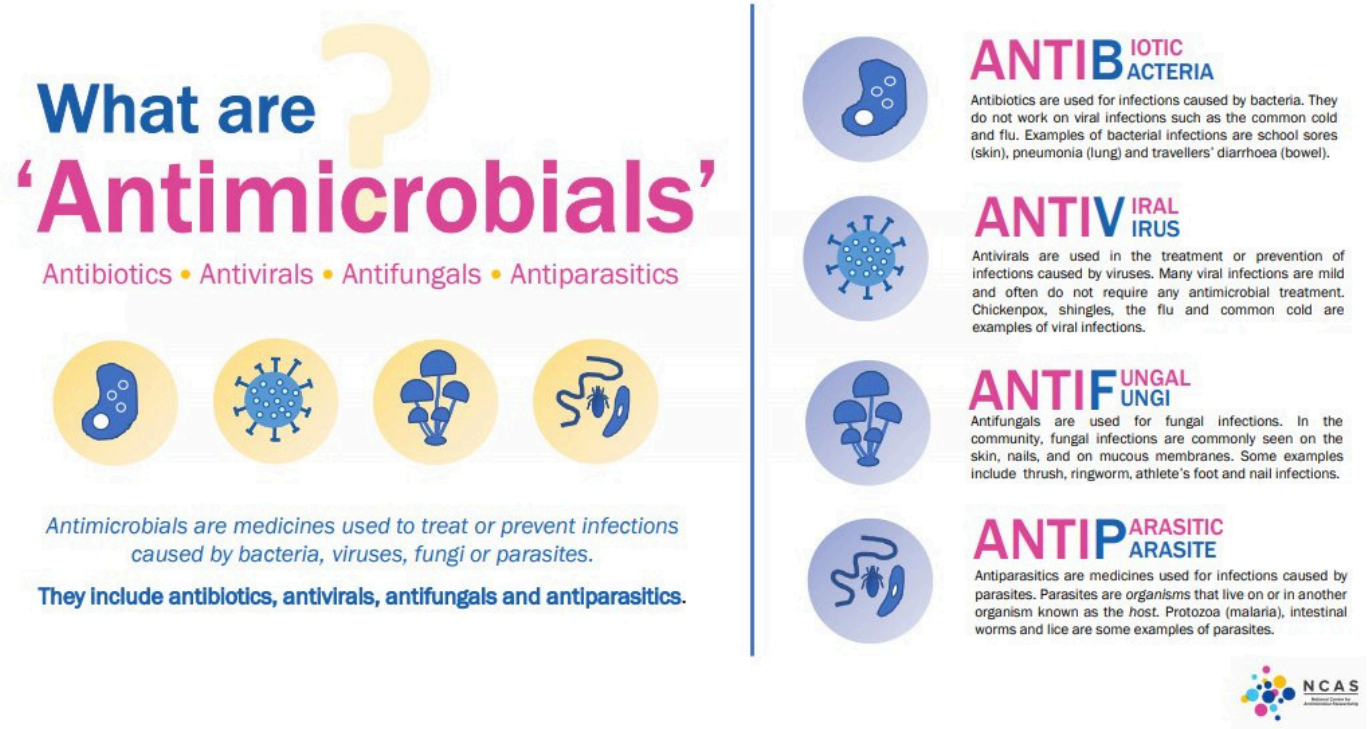
The most common infections as we get older are respiratory infections (chest infections) urine infections and skin infections.

What are antimicrobials?

Antimicrobials are medicines that can help us when we are sick with an infection. They can be lifesaving to many people, especially as we get older.

Sometimes, people get antimicrobials when they don't necessarily need them, and this can lead to us becoming resistant to them. This means that if we do become sick with an infection, we might not be able to treat it properly as the bug we have has built up a resistance to the antimicrobial drugs.

Older people have a higher chance of infections, but also a higher rate of resistance to these antimicrobial drugs and that is why we must be careful how we use medications to treat infections.



Use your caring hands to help with Antimicrobial Stewardship

How you can help

Hand hygiene is one of the most important ways to stay healthy. Washing your hands or using alcohol gel after going to the bathroom, touching other people or eating food.

Ensure support workers and anyone visiting your home uses alcohol gel or washes their hands before and after caring for you.

Don't allow people to visit you who are unwell.

Cover your coughs or sneezes to protect against the spread of germs.

Protect yourself by getting vaccinated against the flu, covid and pneumonia.

Be included in the decisions about medications. Discuss with GP or pharmacist risks such as developing resistances, side effects (loss of appetite and diarrhoea, allergies), disruption of normal flora "good bugs" in the body, interactions between antimicrobials and other drugs you may be taking.

How we all can help

You or your family or representative can help by keeping Southcare up to date by informing us if you are prescribed an antimicrobial from your doctor.

That way we can keep track of when you started them, when you are due to stop them and what kind of infection you have.

The Southcare team will support you by aiming to identify when things aren't quite right with your health and wellbeing, by having discussions with your coordinator, nurse, doctor, and pharmacist as needed.

Southcare will educate our home care team and coordinators on how to minimise the risks of infections and how to identify when you aren't feeling your best and what to do about it.

This information will be recorded, analysed and reported on monthly at our board meetings, with clinical input from our nursing support to monitor our clients that we are aware of who are taking antimicrobials, and to minimise your risk of developing resistance to these drugs.

53 Bickley Crescent, Manning WA 6152
enquiries@southcare.org.au
Phone 9450 6233

www.southcare.org.au

Southcare