

## By Dr. G. R. Neel

ANTIBIOTICS have saved millions of lives since they were first introduced in the 1940s and 1950s. Antibiotics are important medicines used to treat infections caused by bacteria. Antibiotics work by blocking vital processes in bacteria, killing the bacteria, or stopping them from multiplying.

This helps the body's natural immune system to fight the bacterial infection. Antibiotics differ in the types of bacteria they work against. Bacteria are prokaryotic microorganisms; some are beneficial; others cause infections. Bacteria can cause infections of the skin, throat, lung and urinary tract. Infections can also be caused by viruses. Examples of virus-caused infections are the common cold, influenza, chickenpox, and AIDS.

Antibiotics are powerful medicines, but they're not always the answer!

Misusing antibiotics now means they may not work when needed later to fight a bacterial infection

We all need to play a role to help keep antibiotics working!

UN warned on misuse of antibiotics in India

A report published on 31st July:

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When a human is infected by such resistant bacteria they can get infections. As these bacteria can withstand the effect of antibiotics, it makes it difficult to treat infections in humans.

Diseases such as tuberculosis (TB) and pneumonia are treated with antibiotics like ciprofloxacin; however, if the bacteria are antibiotic-resistant then it can get complex to treat such diseases. Many antibiotics are no longer effective against the bacteria they once killed, because they have been overused. Bacteria can adapt and find ways to survive the effects of an antibiotic. They become 'antibiotic resistant', meaning that the antibiotic no longer works. The more often

