

HOW TO TALK ABOUT SUPERBUGS

FRAMING THE ISSUE

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CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

Start by explaining what superbugs and antimicrobial resistance are in simple terms.

- Superbugs are bacteria that have become resistant to antibiotics.
- Superbugs occur when bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites evolve to resist the effects of medications, making infections harder to treat.

IMPORTANCE AND RELEVANCE

Highlight why this issue is important.

- Superbugs can cause infections that are difficult, sometimes impossible, to treat.
- Superbugs can lead to longer hospital stays, higher medical costs, and increased mortality.

PERSONAL IMPACT

Make it personal by explaining how it can affect individuals and their loved ones.

- Everyone is at risk, especially the very young, elderly, and those with weakened immune systems.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Discuss the broader impact on public health and the economy.

- Superbugs is a global threat that requires a collective effort to combat.
- They affect low-income countries hardest, because those are places that don't have access to effective health care, sanitation and medicine.
- ...But superbugs don't respect borders. Resistant infections travel quickly. That's why it's a problem for everyone.

HOW TO TALK ABOUT SUPERBUGS

EXPLAINING THE BASICS

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DEFINITION AND EXAMPLES

Clearly define key terms and provide examples.

- Antibiotics: Medications used to treat bacterial infections.
- Superbugs: Bacteria like MRSA and multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis.

HOW RESISTANCE DEVELOPS

Explain how superbugs occur.

- Overuse and misuse of antibiotics in humans and animals.
- Not completing prescribed antibiotic courses.
- Poor infection control in healthcare settings.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

Address and correct common misunderstandings.

- Misconception: "Antibiotics can treat viral infections."
Fact: Antibiotics are ineffective against viruses.
- Misconception: "It's okay to stop antibiotics when you feel better."
Fact: Not completing the course can lead to resistance.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Highlight ways to prevent superbugs.

- Only use antibiotics when prescribed by a healthcare professional.
- Complete the full course of treatment, even if you feel better.
- Never share or use leftover antibiotics.
- Practice good hygiene to prevent infections.
- Stay up-to-date with vaccinations.

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TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

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USE SIMPLE LANGUAGE

Avoid medical jargon to ensure everyone can understand.



BE EMPATHETIC

Show understanding and concern for their questions and fears.



INTERACTIVE APPROACH

Encourage questions and engage in a two-way conversation.



USE ANALOGIES

Relate superbugs to everyday experiences to make it more relatable.



TACKLE MISINFORMATION

Direct them to trustworthy sources of information, like the WHO or CDC website.



MAKE IT VISUAL

A picture tells a thousand words. www.woundsthatwontheal.com is a great place to start.



STAY POSITIVE

Don't focus on doom and gloom – provide them with hope and explain what they can do to make a difference.

