



**18.11.2015 – It is no secret that there are high proportions of antibiotic resistance in bacteria that cause common infections. However, awareness on how to change the way antibiotics are being used is lacking among citizens, health workers, policy-makers and the agricultural sector. This is why the first World Antibiotic Awareness Week will be held from 16 to 22 November 2015.**

A recent WHO-survey highlights how people are confused about this major threat to public health and do not understand how to prevent it from growing.

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64% of respondents believe antibiotics can be used to treat colds and flu, despite the fact that antibiotics have no impact on viruses

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32% of people surveyed believe they should stop taking antibiotics when they feel better, rather than completing the prescribed course of treatment.

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57% of respondents feel there is not much they can do to stop antibiotic resistance.

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44% of people surveyed think antibiotic resistance is only a problem for people who take antibiotics regularly.

In fact, anyone, of any age, in any country can get an antibiotic-resistant infection.

The over-use and misuse of antibiotics in livestock, aquaculture and crops is one key factor contributing to antibiotic resistance and its spread into the environment, food chain, and humans. This is compromising our ability to treat infectious diseases and undermining many advances in medicine.



To address this growing problem, a global action plan to tackle antimicrobial resistance was endorsed at the World Health Assembly in May 2015. One of the plan's 5 objectives is to improve awareness and understanding of antibiotic resistance through effective communication, education and training.

World Antibiotic Awareness Week will highlight the importance of understanding the problem and changing the way antibiotics are used.

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UNRIC's Related Links:

[Press Release WHO Survey](#)

[WHO \(Official Website\)](#)

[EU Antibiotics Awareness Day](#)

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## Antibiotics: Handle With Care

Wednesday, 18 November 2015 00:00

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