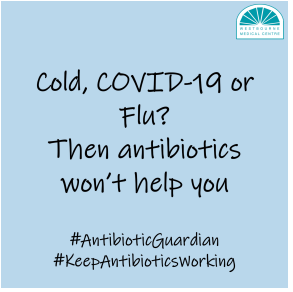
World Antimicrobial Awareness Week: Protect Antibiotics, Protect Our Future

This week, we are joining the global effort to raise awareness about one of the world's biggest health threats: antimicrobial resistance. This can happen when antibiotics are not used correctly, for example if you take them when they're not really needed, or if you don't finish the full course. This can encourage harmful bacteria that live inside you to become resistant. This means that antibiotics may not work when you really need them, leading to a higher risk of more severe or longer illness. Ultimately, medicines that we rely on to save lives may stop working.

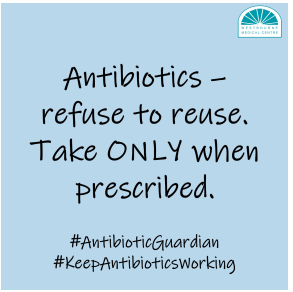
As part of our commitment to combat antimicrobial resistance, we're sharing some important facts, tips and actions you can take to help protect you, your family and the world from infections and antibiotic resistance.

1. Prevention is better than cure
    - **Wash your hands regularly** to stop the spread of germs
    - **Cover coughs and sneezes** to protect others
    - **Get vaccinated** if safe to do so
    - **Stay hydrated** to prevent urine infections
    - **Clean and dress wounds properly** to avoid infections

2. Don't demand antibiotics
    - **Remember, antibiotics don't work on viral infections** like colds, the flu, or COVID-19
    - **Coughs in children** can last for 3-4 weeks but tend to get better by themselves
    - **Antibiotics come with risks**, such as side effects like nausea and vomiting



3. Take antibiotics exactly as prescribed
    - **Take them at the right time and dose** to make sure they work effectively
    - **Complete the full course**, even if you feel better
    - **Never share them or save them for later** - this can increase resistance and harm others



4. Dispose of antibiotics properly
    - **Never flush them down the toilet or pour them down drains** - this is harmful to animals and the environment and promotes resistance
    - **Return them to a pharmacy** for safe disposal

We all have a role in stopping the spread of antimicrobial resistance. By using antibiotics responsibly and following these steps, we can help to make sure antibiotics still work for future generations.

For more information, check out our Instagram and Facebook and join us in our fight against antimicrobial resistance!