

Bengal Journal of Otolaryngology and Head Neck Surgery

Official Publication of The Association of Otolaryngologists of India, West Bengal

Volume 31 No. 3 - December, 2023

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p-ISSN: 2395-2393

e-ISSN: 2395-2407

RNI No : 62551/95



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Bengal Journal of Otolaryngology and Head Neck Surgery

(Incorporating and directly descended from State Journal of Otolaryngology and Otolaryngology, Calcutta)

Published by

The Association of Otolaryngologists of India, West Bengal
CMC House, 91B Chittaranjan Avenue,
Kolkata - 700073,
West Bengal,
India.

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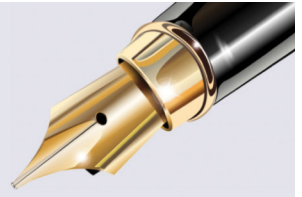
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From the Desk of the Editor



Antibiotics have undoubtedly revolutionized the treatment of infectious diseases and saved countless lives. Antibiotics are often considered a “magic bullet”. But for many reasons, antibiotic resistance has become one of the world’s emerging health problems. The unnecessary use of antibiotics for viral diseases has led to an increase in antibiotic resistance. Antibiotic misuse is facilitated by a number of factors, including availability online, the desire to recover quickly, the possibility of developing new illnesses, and leftover medicines. It’s tempting to stop taking antibiotics as soon as you feel better. But to destroy the bacteria that cause the disease, you must go through the entire course of treatment. If you do not take the antibiotic as directed, you may need to restart the treatment later. If you stop using it, it can also encourage the spread of antibiotic-resistant traits among harmful bacteria. Antibiotics can disrupt sensitive gut flora and cause other infections, such as *Clostridium difficile* and other antibiotic-related diarrhea. Misuse of antibiotics increases the incidence of untreated skin diseases. Antibiotic-resistant infections lead to more serious illness, longer recovery times, more healthcare provider visits, more frequent or longer hospitalizations, and more expensive treatments. WHO has developed strategies to improve the appropriate use of antimicrobials. WHO has also emphasized antimicrobial stewardship programs (ASPs), including education for doctors and patients. Each healthcare institute must develop its own antibiotic guidelines based on the existing hospital-specific antibiogram with the help of a hospital-level infection control committee (HICC). A state-level antibiotic guideline will help institutes and treating doctors, who do not have institution-specific antibiotic guideline, to prescribe empirical antibiotic therapy prior to receiving the culture and sensitivity reports. The presence of infectious disease specialists in hospitals can also help reduce irrational antibiotic prescribing. Over-the-counter sale of antibiotics should be prohibited. Physicians must actively participate in audits, improving patient communication using brochures. The public also plays a role in antibiotic stewardship program. They should avoid pressuring a healthcare provider to prescribe antibiotics. They must take the antibiotics exactly as prescribed by the doctor and complete the entire course of treatment. They should tell their doctor if any side effect occurs. They should never take leftover antibiotics for a later illness. They should never take antibiotics prescribed for another person or let someone else take their antibiotics.

Dr. Chiranjib Das
Executive Editor
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