

Drug-Resistant Infections 101

Drug-resistant infections affect millions of Americans every year and can impact anyone, anywhere, at any stage of life.

What is a drug-resistant infection? When germs, like bacteria and fungi, develop the ability to defeat the drugs designed to kill them—making the infections they cause difficult, or impossible, to treat.

Why is it a problem? When drugs like antibiotics and antifungals no longer work against infections, it can lead to longer, more severe illnesses, or even deaths.

How does it spread? Drug-resistant germs can spread between people, animals, and the environment.

Who is at risk? Anyone can get a drug-resistant infection, regardless of age or health status.



Everyday actions can play a major role in preventing infections from happening in the first place and preventing the spread of drug-resistant germs.



What can you do?

No one can completely avoid getting an infection, but there are steps you can take to reduce your risk and help stop the spread of germs.



Know your risk for certain infections and ask your healthcare provider about questions or concerns.



Keep your hands clean to avoid getting sick and prevent spreading germs to others.



Talk to a healthcare provider about recommended vaccines to prevent certain illnesses.



Use antibiotics and antifungals appropriately and only as prescribed by your healthcare provider.



Be aware of changes in your health so you can recognize the signs and symptoms of infections.



Want to know more?

Learn what you can do to help protect yourself and those you care for at [CDC.gov/antimicrobial-resistance](https://www.cdc.gov/antimicrobial-resistance).



Revised June 2026