



LAKELAND CHIROPRACTIC

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Antibiotic Resistance Now Deemed a "Public Health Crisis"

The above headline is from an April 30, 2003 article from Reuters Health. On that same date panelists from the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA), the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America, and the Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists warned that the medical community is losing the fight against antibiotic-resistant "superbugs" and few new drugs are in development to counter this growing threat. The article states that the panel called for "immediate national action" to limit the threat through judicious use of antibiotics and better infection-control practices.

Dr. Martin Blaser, chairman of the department of medicine at New York University School of Medicine and a representative of IDSA, told Reuters Health, "Every time you prescribe an antibiotic, you are affecting not just that patient, but all living and all future living organisms." He went on to say, "Antibiotic resistance is a function of antibiotic use, and we're currently using tons of antibiotics. And since there are relatively few antibiotics in the pipeline, when we reach a certain level of resistance, we'll have no reinforcements."

Dr. Neil Fishman, director of the department of healthcare epidemiology and infection control and director of the antimicrobial management program at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, told conference attendees, "We used to think of resistance as predominantly a problem in hospitals. But it has become more and more common in the community. We also thought the organisms involved were different, but now, all the divisions are blurring."

The point about super infections moving outside hospitals was made in an Oct. 23, 2002 Medscape article titled, "Antibiotic-Resistant Staph Moves Outside Hospital". In this article researchers reporting at an American Academy of Pediatrics meeting stated that doctors need to be alert for an antibiotic-resistant form of a common staph infection that is quickly spreading in some communities. Sheldon Kaplan, MD, professor and vice chair for clinical affairs in the department of pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine and chief of infectious diseases at Texas Children's Hospital noted that 70% of the community-acquired staph infections treated over the past year at the Texas Children's Hospital in Houston were resistant to a class of antibiotics that were once the first-line treatment. He said, "Five years ago, we didn't see it, now you assume the organism is resistant."

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