

Promoting Responsible Antibiotic Use

Each year, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) encourages healthcare providers to raise awareness about the importance of appropriate antibiotic use. Overuse or misuse — such as taking antibiotics for viral infections or other non-bacterial illnesses — can contribute to antibiotic resistance. This leads to the emergence of “superbugs,” which are increasingly difficult to treat.

Providers play a key role in helping patients understand when antibiotics are necessary and when they are not. Patients may ask for an antibiotic for ailments like a cold because they’ve become accustomed to getting them for bacterial sinus infections. Having clear conversations about appropriate use can help set expectations and build trust. When you prescribe antibiotics, it’s essential that patients understand how to take them exactly as directed to ensure effectiveness and reduce the risk of resistance.

For conditions that do not respond to antibiotics, discussing alternative treatments can help manage symptoms and improve patient outcomes without unnecessary medication.

To support these conversations, Louisiana Blue has a short video explaining proper antibiotic use, which you can share with your patients: www.youtube.com/watch?v=NGcM9AmXYYQ.

Additional information and materials from the CDC are available on the Antimicrobial Resistance resource page: www.cdc.gov/antimicrobial-resistance/about/index.html. The CDC also offers free promotional messaging, graphics, events and social media tools.