

Doctors Urge Action Against Deadly Infections

(NAPSA)—America can avoid a scary future—if we learn to turn things around soon when it comes to antibiotic drug resistance.

Government and medical experts are growing increasingly alarmed about the rapid spread of deadly infections caused by “superbugs,” bacteria that have outsmarted the antibiotics used to treat them. Medical advances made possible by antibiotics—such as surgery, chemotherapy, organ transplants and care of premature babies—are in jeopardy.

The World Health Organization has ranked antimicrobial drug resistance among the greatest threats to human health on the planet. Drug resistance costs the U.S. \$21 billion to \$34 billion every year.

Just one superbug, methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, or “MRSA,” kills 19,000 Americans each year. That is more than emphysema, HIV/AIDS, Parkinson’s disease, and homicide combined. MRSA has learned how to defend itself against antibiotics. This makes it much harder for doctors to protect people from serious infections. MRSA is harming healthy people and those who are ill from other diseases. Other bacterial infections are becoming even harder to treat.

Many factors are to blame, including overuse and misuse of antibiotics. New antibiotics aren’t being developed fast enough to protect everyday Americans from these dangerous superbugs. Experts say this public health crisis is only going to get worse. Soon we will have no antibiotics left to treat our children and grandchildren—unless we ask Congress to pass laws to protect us.

“The ways we have produced and used antibiotics for 70 years are failing us. We must act now, or we will end up back in the dark



The ways we have produced and used antibiotics for 70 years are failing us. Congress must act to protect people from drug-resistant infections.

ages of health care and everybody will wonder why nothing was done,” said Jim Hughes, M.D., president of the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA), a national organization of infectious diseases physicians and scientific experts. “The good news is we have a rescue plan, but we need help convincing leaders in Congress, the federal government and the health care industry.”

IDSA’s rescue plan, “Combatting Antimicrobial Resistance: Policy Recommendations to Save Lives,” supports both economic incentives to encourage new antibiotics and programs to ensure that the drugs we have are used wisely. IDSA is aiming for 10 new antibiotics approved by 2020.

You can learn more about IDSA’s plan and how to contact your representatives in Congress at www.capwiz.com/idsociety/issues/alert/?alertid=7478136.



Ten new **ANTIBIOTICS** by 2020