

The Rise of the Superbug!

Routine use of antibiotics in the livestock industry creates superbugs

- 80% of all antibiotics in the U.S. are used in the agricultural sector.
- Animals are fed antibiotics for unnatural growth promotion & disease prevention in the cramped conditions of factory farms.
- The use of antibiotics as food additives facilitates the evolution and spread of antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria to the public.



These superbugs are costing U.S.

- The Infectious Disease Society of America declared antibiotic-resistant infections to be a national epidemic.
- The U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) estimated that 2 million people contract resistant infections annually.
- The Institute of Medicine estimated that antimicrobial resistance costs the U.S. \$4-\$5 billion annually.

This problem has gone global

- The CDC acknowledged in a report that antibiotics used in livestock play a role in antibiotic resistance and "should be phased out."
- In 2006, the EU banned the use of all antibiotics for non-medical purposes in agriculture.
- In 2016, all UN Member states pledged to strengthen regulation of antimicrobials, citing overuse in animals as a main source of concern.

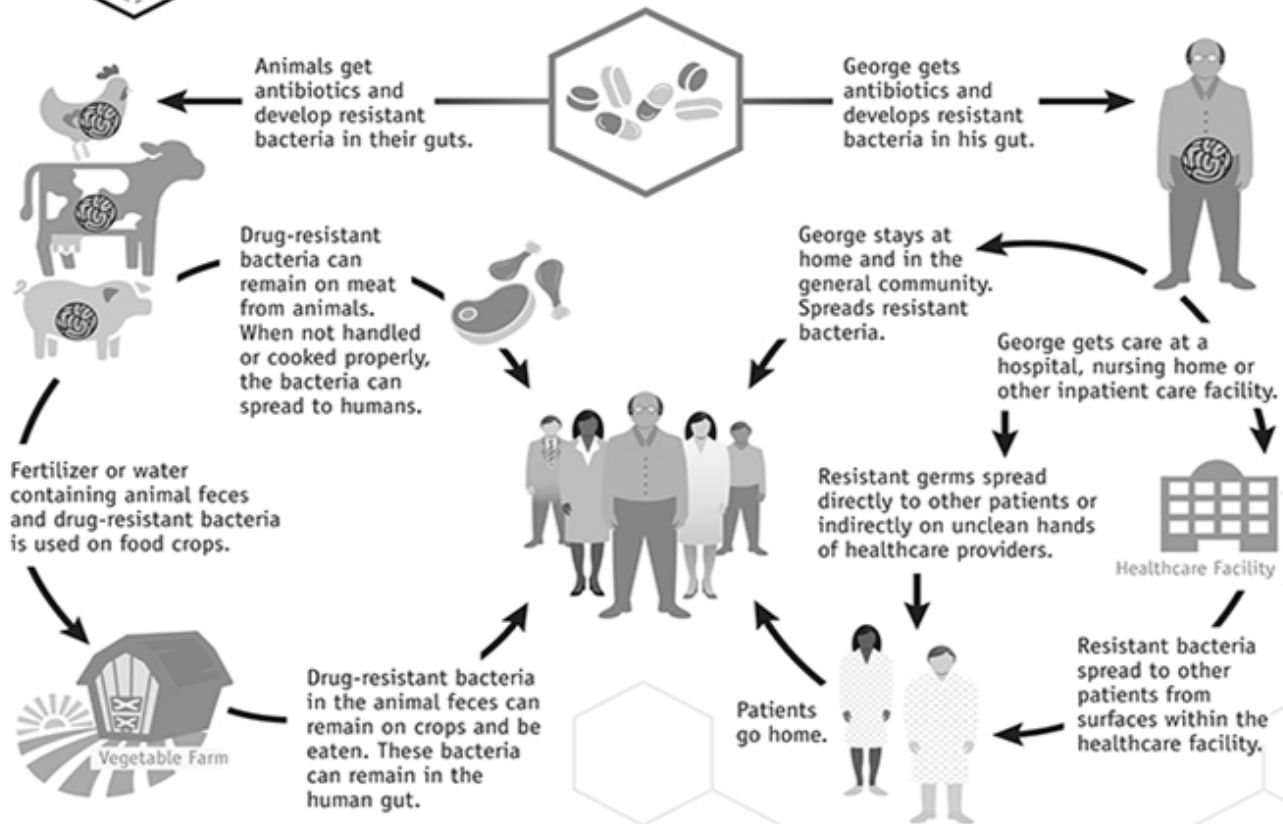
Bacterial resistance can be transmitted many ways

Antibiotic resistant bacteria from factory farm facilities can reach humans through many routes, including: food, water, air, or contact.

- 1) Animals are fed the antibiotics through their feed.
- 2) When they reach the gut, they can make some of the gut bacteria resistant.
- 3) This "super bacteria" can persist through processing and lead to food-borne illness & resistance far from its origins.
- 4) In addition, the antibiotic resistant bacteria can hitch a ride on the clothing of factory farm workers or flow into the surrounding environment through the infected animal's manure.



Examples of How Antibiotic Resistance Spreads



Simply using antibiotics creates resistance. These drugs should only be used to treat infections.

Studies show that the threat is more than hypothetical

- A published medical study found that people who live near hog farms have a much greater risk of contracting MRSA.
- The New York Times wrote an article about MRSA outbreaks in Carroll County, Indiana where over 10% of the town of Flora's population, a town surrounded by hog farms, contracted this potentially lethal condition.
- A 2009 Iowa study found that 70% of hogs and 64% of factory farm workers tested positive for antibiotic-resistant MRSA.
- The CDC reported that by 2005, MRSA was killing more than 18,000 Americans a year, more than AIDS.

Recommendations:

- ⇒ When buying meat, choose products labeled: "raised without antibiotics," "no antibiotics ever," or "organic."
- ⇒ Build a relationship with a local farmer who you can source antibiotic-free, local meat from.
- ⇒ Patronize local farmers markets.

Take Action: Let your lawmakers know how you feel about factory farming!

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