

Antibiotic Activism

MIKE AUERBACH, Editor, Pharmaceutical Processing

By MIKE AUERBACH, Editor, *Pharmaceutical Processing*



I'm a big fan of those web stories that list 10 things your (insert name of profession) won't tell you. From waiters to flight attendants to nurses — I've read them all — and most of their insights are not pretty.

I recently came across one of these articles that was entitled: "11 Things Your Pediatrician Won't Tell You." Reading through the list, I probably shouldn't have been surprised by this, "Even though studies show that antibiotics for ear infections are rarely better than watching and waiting for kids over age two, many of us prescribe them anyway. We want to feel like we're doing something. If I prescribe an antibiotic, and a few days later, your child feels better, I look like a genius."

Perhaps I shouldn't have been as shocked by this as I was. The message that antibiotic resistance is a growing problem has been beaten to death — and you would think that most parents are aware of it. But parents can be a bit "weird" when it comes to their child's health. Simply witness the controversy regarding childhood vaccines as an example.

And, as a parent myself, I, too, have succumbed to the "Can you give them something?" request. Specifically, when the doctor does the "quick" strep test in the office and it comes back negative, but the doctor still has to wait for the more accurate overnight test.

In most instances, I have asked the doctor to prescribe an antibiotic just in case the test comes back positive — that way my child can get a jump-start on his course of antibiotics.

I can also see how doctors are caught in the middle of this situation. They know that, for ear infections and viruses, antibiotics don't help. But they are pressured by parents and perhaps their own desire to do something — which results in a script for antibiotic.

Whether you like it or not, we are living in a world that is acutely aware of all the "bugs" out there. Everywhere you look, hand sanitizer is available. Even catching a minor head cold is to be avoided at all costs. Are we sanitizing and over-prescribing ourselves to death?

Antibiotic Activism

Published on Chem.Info (<http://www.chem.info>)

Let me know what you think. Please feel free to email me at mike.auerbach@advantagemedia.com [1] or leave a comment below!

Source URL (retrieved on 09/20/2014 - 7:13pm):

http://www.chem.info/blogs/2012/03/antibiotic-activism?qt-most_popular=0

Links:

[1] <mailto:mike.auerbach@advantagemedia.com>