



# The Patient Perspective | November 2023

[Campaign Preview](#)

[HTML Source](#)

[Plain Text Email](#)

[Details](#)



Dear reader,

Every year, November 18 marks European Antibiotic Awareness Day (EAAD), an initiative coordinated by the **European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control** (ECDC) to promote the prudent use of antimicrobials. This day gives us the opportunity to understand why **Antimicrobial Resistance** (AMR) is such a problem and, more importantly, what patients can do about it.

First, what is AMR? AMR, defined by the ECDC as "*the ability of bacteria to combat the action of one or several antimicrobials*", is on the rise and is already responsible for over 35,000 deaths in the European Union (EU), Iceland and Norway – as many as influenza, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS combined.

A future characterised by increasingly ineffective antibiotics would threaten the foundations of modern medicine, which is heavily dependent on antibiotics, and would put patient safety at great risk. This is especially the case for patients with chronic illnesses, who are particularly vulnerable to AMR because they spend more time in healthcare settings and because many routine healthcare procedures often require the use of antibiotics to prevent or treat infections.

In practice, AMR would make it difficult to safely perform organ transplants, cancer chemotherapy, intensive care or surgical procedures. Simple infections could become difficult or impossible to treat without effective antibiotics or other antimicrobials, causing long-lasting sickness or death. To avoid a world where antibiotics are increasingly