

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Florida Department of Health Raises Awareness during *Get Smart about Antibiotics Week***

**Tallahassee** - The Florida Department of Health, in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is participating in *Get Smart about Antibiotics Week*, which is dedicated to raising awareness of antibiotic resistance and promoting appropriate antibiotic use. The effort addresses the popular belief in antibiotics as a fix-all remedy and emphasizes the dangers that antibiotic overuse poses to Floridians.

“While antibiotics should be used to treat bacterial infections, they are not effective against viral infections that cause the common cold, most sore throats, and the flu,” said Dr. Celeste Philip, Deputy Secretary for Health and Deputy State Health Officer for Children’s Medical Services (CMS). “Widespread use of antibiotics promotes the spread of antibiotic resistance. Appropriate use of antibiotics is the key to controlling the spread of resistance.”

*Get Smart about Antibiotics Week* seeks to educate the public about appropriate antibiotic use as well as the imminent threat of antibiotic resistance. As antibiotic use increases, bacteria evolve to combat the effects of the drug, eventually eliminating the effectiveness of antibiotic drugs completely which has led to severe illness and death in some cases.

The Florida Department of Health encourages medical professionals to work together to reduce the unnecessary use of antibiotics. It is estimated that more than 50 percent of antibiotics are prescribed in office settings for cough and cold illnesses which are caused by viruses that cannot be cured by antibiotics.

“The public can also help minimize the spread of antibiotic resistance,” said Dr. Philip. “Ask your doctor about effective ways to get symptom relief from viral infections. When antibiotics are needed, it is also important to take the entire course of the medicine, even if the patient begins to feel better.”

To learn more about *Get Smart about Antibiotics Week*, please visit the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/getsmart/campaign-materials/week/overview.html>.

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**Florida Department of Health**

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