

Record Levels of Antibiotic-Resistant Superbugs Found in Grocery Store Chicken

Researchers in the United Kingdom have found that supermarket chickens have a higher proportion of *Campylobacter* bacteria than they did ten years ago. Drug-resistant *Campylobacter* is a major cause of concern for health officials, with more than 300,000 infections a year in the U.S. causing symptoms like diarrhea, fever, abdominal cramps, and temporary paralysis. The elevated levels of this pathogen in supermarket protein confirm what scientists and medical professionals have increasingly been saying – treating food animals for long periods with antibiotics intended for human use has caused a major health crisis.

Dangerous Practices

If we are unable to find an answer to antibiotic-resistant pathogens, the World Health Organization predicts that they will kill more people than cancer does by the year 2050. Even major pharmaceutical companies like GlaxoSmithKline and Pfizer are beginning to recognize the severity of this issue, removing or adjusting sales incentives related to the sale of antibiotics. Yet British and European authorities still allow chickens to be treated with fluoroquinolone antibiotics, that have been restricted by the FDA for human use.

The Tipping Point

Pharmaceuticals have been slow to develop new antibiotics, and farmers continue to use medication intended for human use on their food animals. At some point, something will need to change. So what can you do right now?

The easiest and most obvious way to protect yourself is to avoid antibiotics, through what you consume and the medications you take. Conventionally raised meat and dairy are a key factor in the rise of antibiotic-resistant bacteria and should be avoided. While antibiotics may be necessary in some cases, they are prescribed far too often in the modern medical system. Fortifying your immune system decreases the likelihood of catching a bug that would need antibiotic treatment.

Sources:

- *Chickens From British Supermarket Show Record Levels of Antibiotic Superbugs* – Collective Evolution
- *Biggest Threats* – CDC.gov
- *Be Warned: FDA Issues New Stronger Warnings About Risks of Fluoroquinolone Antibiotics* – Collective Evolution
- *Four companies move to decouple antibiotic sales volumes from sales agents' bonuses* – Access to Medicine Foundation