

B14.1.1: What is a Drug?

A drug is any substance that, when taken into the body, can alter the body's chemical processes. This can include substances we commonly think of as drugs, like medicines, but also things like alcohol, caffeine, and even nicotine. These substances interact with our body's systems, affecting how we feel, think, and function.

B14.1.2: The Power of Antibiotics

Antibiotics are a type of drug specifically designed to fight bacterial infections. They work by either killing bacteria or stopping them from reproducing. This gives our immune system a chance to fight off the infection.

B14.1.3: The Rise of Resistant Bacteria

Unfortunately, bacteria can evolve over time. Some bacteria have developed resistance to antibiotics, meaning that these drugs no longer work against them. This is a serious problem, as it can make infections harder to treat.

B14.1.4: Antibiotics vs. Viruses

It's crucial to remember that **antibiotics only work against bacteria, not viruses.** Viruses are much smaller and simpler than bacteria, and they reproduce differently. This means that antibiotics have no effect on viral infections like the common cold or flu.

B14.1.5: Using Antibiotics Wisely

To help slow down the development of antibiotic resistance, it's important to use antibiotics only when necessary. This means:

- **Only taking antibiotics prescribed by a doctor.**
- **Completing the full course of antibiotics, even if you start to feel better.**
- **Not sharing antibiotics with others.**

By using antibiotics responsibly, we can help protect ourselves and future generations from the threat of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.