



Fall 2011

Evaluation of a community program for the wise use of antibiotics

Do Bugs Need Drugs? is a public and professional education program which aims to address the problem of antibiotic resistance by promoting appropriate antibiotic use and reducing the spread of infections.

What is antibiotic resistance?

Antibiotic resistance occurs when bacteria which cause infections become resistant to the antibiotics used to kill them. This is a natural phenomenon, part of natural selection, but is sped up and made worse when we use antibiotics inappropriately.

Do Bugs Need Drugs? is funded by the BC Ministry of Health, and is sustained by community partners, including:

Nurses

Nursing students

Pharmacists & pharmacy technicians

Early childhood educators

Assisted living staff

And many other groups of people who contribute their time and knowledge to teach others about the key messages of Do Bugs Need Drugs?

Progress to date

Since 2005, when the program was launched in BC:

- Overall antibiotic use in BC has decreased by 4%
- Antibiotic use for ear aches has decreased by 21%
- Antibiotic resistance among some bacteria may be stabilizing

Despite some positive progress, we have a ways to go:

- There is still a lot of antibiotic use for viral illnesses, which is unnecessary and contributes to antibiotic resistance
- Antibiotic resistance continues to pose a threat to effective treatment of certain infections

Public education

Our community partners teach grade 2 children, children in day care, and adults in assisted living about the basics in preventing the spread of infections (hand washing!), the differences between bacteria and viruses, and why inappropriate use of antibiotics is a problem.

Since the program began, 55,031 children and adults have been taught around the province

Resources are also available for teachers which can be used with their Kindergarten to Grade 3 classes. These materials have been aligned with the BC Education curriculum.

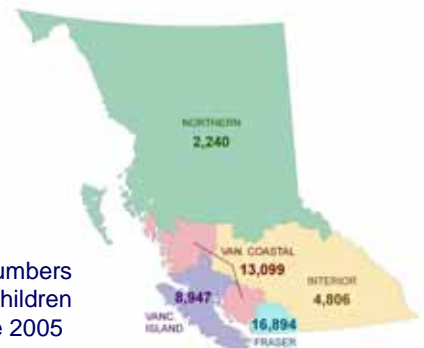


Figure 1: Numbers of grade 2 children taught since 2005

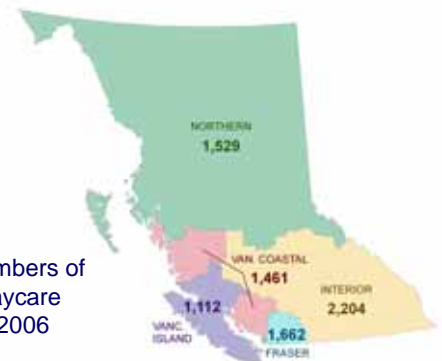


Figure 2: Numbers of children in daycare taught since 2006

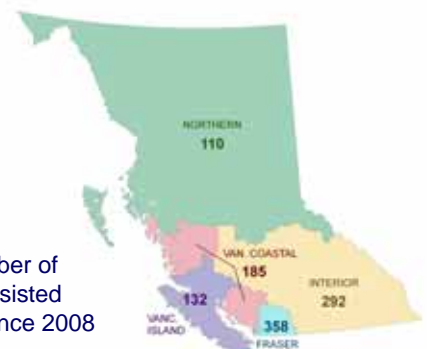
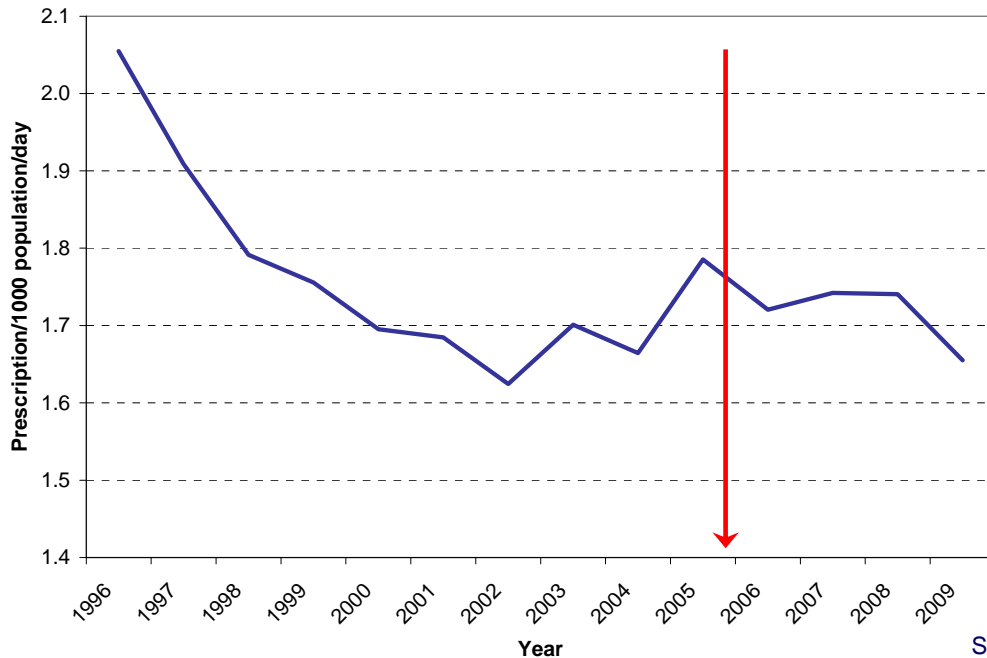


Figure 3: Number of residents in assisted living taught since 2008

Antibiotic use in BC

Figure 4: Overall antibiotic consumption in BC, 1996 - 2009



Source: PharmaNet

The red arrow indicates the beginning of the Do Bugs Need Drugs? program in BC. Between 2002 and 2005, the overall rate of antibiotic use was increasing. Between 2005 and 2009 there was a 4% decline, nearly reaching the lowest rate in the past 15 years.

What can you do?

Wash your hands!

Handwashing is the best way to stop the spread of infections

Remember that not all bugs are created equal

Bacteria and viruses are different. Antibiotics only work against bacteria. Colds, flu, croup, laryngitis, chest colds (bronchitis), and most sore throats are caused by viruses, not bacteria.

Use antibiotics wisely!

Bacteria can become resistant to antibiotics, which makes these drugs ineffective. Trust your doctor if an antibiotic has not been prescribed for your condition, and follow the instructions carefully if you have been prescribed an antibiotic.



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Next steps

Do Bugs Need Drugs? is calling on everyone – the public, healthcare providers and policy makers – to commit to improving antibiotic use in the community. In the coming year we hope to:

- ❖ Continue to contribute to reduction in antibiotic use for viral illnesses
- ❖ Expand the program to reach more children & adults in communities throughout BC
- ❖ Conduct further evaluation of the program impact on antibiotic utilization & resistance

The Do Bugs Need Drugs? program would like to thank our collaborators for sharing the anonymized data that enable our surveillance and evaluation:

BC Ministry of Health, in particular Pharmaceutical Services Division
 PharmaNet
 Medical Services Plan (MSP)
 BC Biomedical Laboratories

The program would also like to thank the many community partners who have helped to deliver the program around the province.

For more information visit
www.bccdc.ca/dbnd
 or
www.dobugsneeddrugs.org



BC Centre for Disease Control
 AN AGENCY OF THE PROVINCIAL HEALTH SERVICES AUTHORITY

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