



Impact of Antimicrobial Resistance : Clinical and Social Aspects

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The optimism of the early period of antimicrobial discovery has been tempered by the emergence of bacterial strains with resistance to these therapeutics. Today, clinically important bacteria are characterized not only by single drug resistance but also by multiple antibiotic resistance - the legacy of past decades of antimicrobial use and misuse. Resistance to antimicrobial drugs is increasing at an alarming rate among both gram-positive and gram-negative bacteria. Traditionally, bacteria resistant to multiple antimicrobial agents have been restricted to the nosocomial environment. A disturbing trend has been the recent emergence and spread of resistant pathogens and resistance traits in nursing homes, the community, as well as in hospitals. As a result, diseases including typhoid fever, dysentery, gonorrhoea, and tuberculosis, once able to be prevented and/or treated with safe inexpensive antibiotics are now reemerging and having social impact worldwide.