

The Times of India

Title : Use of antibiotics in India rises 62% in 10 yrs: Study

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BRICS Nations Lead Spurt Worldwide From 2000-10

India has emerged as the world's largest consumer of antibiotics, with a 62% increase in use over the past decade.

'Global Trends in Antibiotic Consumption, 2000-2010', a study by scientists from Princeton University, has found that worldwide antibiotic use has risen by 36% over those 10 years, with five countries -Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) -responsible for more than threequarters of that surge.

Among the 16 groups of antibiotics studied, cephalosporins, broad-spectrum penicillins and fluoroquinolones accounted for over half of that increase, with consumption rising 55% from 2000 to 2010. During this period, India's antibiotic use went up from 8 billion units (2001) to 12.9 billion units (2010).

The study quantifies the growing alarm surrounding antibiotic-resistant pathogens and a loss of efficacy among antibiotics used to combat the most common illnesses. It confirms an increasing resistance to carbapenems and polymyxins, two classes of drugs long considered the last resort antibiotics for illnesses without any other known treatment.

“Indians consume around 11 antibiotic tablets per year,” Ramanan Laxminarayan, one of the authors of the study, told TOI. “That's five days of antibiotics for every person in the country, which is more than the Chinese or Brazilians.

“An average Chinese popped seven antibiotic pills a year.

However, both India and China's numbers are lesser than the Americans who on average pop 22 antibiotic pills a year.

The paper confirms that global use of antibiotics is surging and specially in India.“

Laxminarayan said that was both good news and bad news. “It means that more Indians are able to access antibiotics, which are particularly important for those who previously died of easily treatable infections,” he said.

“However, the massive increase in use, both appropriate and inappropriate, is leading to increases in drug resistance.

Antibiotic use is the single most important reason for resistance. Also use of last resort drugs like carbapenems has gone up significantly in India, and it is difficult to justify why such powerful antibiotics are being used so much more frequently,” he added.

For full report, log on to <http://www.timesofindia.com>

AN INDIAN POPS 11 ANTIBIOTICS A YR

Average Indian's use of antibiotics per year rose by **62%** from 2001 to 2010

➤ Figure still less than number of pills an **average American pops a day (22)**

India's antibiotic use went up from 8 billion units in 2001 to 12.9 billion units in 2010

In India, **antibiotic usage peaks between Jul-Sept**, coinciding with end of monsoon season

➤ Worldwide antibiotic use up by staggering 36% over past 10 years; **BRICS countries account for over 75% of this surge**

➤ Study confirms increasing resistance to carbapenems and polymyxins – **last-resort antibiotics for illnesses without any other known treatment**

Antibiotic resistance causes people to be sick for longer; increases risk of death

