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Rising Plague: The Global Threat From Deadly Bacteria And Our Dwindling Arsenal To Fight Them



Synopsis

Antibiotic-resistant microbes infect more than 2 million Americans and kill over 100,000 each year. They spread rapidly, even in such seemingly harmless places as high school locker rooms, where they infect young athletes. Throughout the world, many more people are dying from these infections. Astoundingly, as antibiotic resistant infections are skyrocketing in incidence—creating a critical need for new antibiotics—research and development of new antibiotics has ground to a screeching halt! In *Rising Plague*, Dr. Brad Spellberg—an infectious diseases specialist and member of a national task force charged with attacking antibiotic resistant infections—tells the story of this potentially grave public health crisis. The author shares true and very moving patient stories to emphasize the terrible frustration he and his colleagues have experienced while attempting to treat untreatable infections, not to mention the heart-break and tragedy that many of these patients' families had to endure. Dr. Spellberg corrects the nearly universal misperception that physician misuse of antibiotics and "dirty hospitals" are responsible for causing antibiotic-resistant infections. He explains the true causes of antibiotic resistance and of the virtual collapse of antibiotic research and development. Most important, he advocates ways to reverse this dire trend and instead bolster the production of desperately needed new and effective antibiotics. He also warns against complacency induced by the decades-old assumption that some miracle drug will always be available to ensure the continuation of our "antibiotic era." If we do nothing, we run the risk of inviting a bleak future when infectious diseases will once again reign supreme. Then many of the medical breakthroughs that we now take for granted—from routine surgery and organ transplants to intensive care and battlefield medicine—might all be threatened. This crucial and timely book is lucidly written in terms that everyone can understand. It issues a call to action, explaining how, through a strong and concerted effort, we can all help prevent this nightmare scenario from happening. By following this courageous doctor's recommendations, we can assure that magic bullets will be there for our families and us in the future.

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Customer Reviews

As seen on The Doctors, PBS Frontline, and Katie!"Clear and concise, with a good mix of dramatic (and, at times, tragic) examples and hard statistics.... The book ends with an admonition to take the threat of drug-resistant bacteria seriously; when you've finished reading, you'll find it impossible to disagree." -San Francisco Book Review "This readable, well-written volume will resonate with a diverse audience, It provides an excellent review of the problems associated with antibiotic resistance, explains the causes, and recommends solutions to encourage discovery and development of new antibiotics. Highly recommended." -Choice "Avoiding medical jargon, this fast-paced call to action should be read by anyone concerned about our medical future. Highly recommended." -Library Journal

Brad Spellberg, MD (Los Angeles, CA) is associate professor of medicine at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA and is based in the Divisions of General Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases at the Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute and Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. He was featured on an Emmy award-winning episode of NOVA called "Rise of the Superbugs." He is the author (with Carlos Ayala, MD) of the popular Boards and Wards series of medical review books.

This book made me realize how vulnerable we all are to bacterial infections. The drug companies are all about \$\$\$.

Spellberg provides a cogent thoughtful summary of resistant infections and the need for immediate developmental efforts to discover, design and test new antibiotics to combat the emerging

resistance crisis. He offers a variety of financial and regulatory incentives to encourage such development. A worthwhile contribution to the subject.

Lucid, well-written and argued. Language sufficiently simplified for a non-medical reader. In addition to explicating a position on this issue, the book also contains an excellent section (useful for anyone with an interest in how research becomes new medicine or technology) that describes the intersection of government funding/legislation, biomedical research, and technology companies. He clearly explains how the roles of each are different, how it would be near-impossible for one to assume the roles of any other, and why collaboration of the three is required for scientific advances to reach patients. This is a quick, incisively-written, informative read.

This is a great explanation of the current situation in antibiotic stagnation, providing a generally good survey of the problems and challenges of bureaucracy, government intervention, profitability, and costs associated with drug testing and development. I took away one star for the unwanted "personal stories." If you feel a need to share in the personal anguish of those suffering, it's 5 Stars.

Amazing book, I wish he would have spoke a bit about things like sida, cryptolepis, got away a tad from reduction science, the reason I say that is because the garbage big-pharma groups have actually said they will not be developing new antibiotics. In defense of writer, that was announced in 2013 along with cdc saying we are entering a post antibiotic era. Wonder how CEO's of big pharma would feel if thier kids or grand kids got a resistant strain and couldnt recover? Maybe their profit shares would quell the remorse.

As the head an infection control company with 800+ reps, this was the most useful training tool I have found for myself and team. Puts the problem in plain English, yet doesn't mince words or sugarcoat. Fantastic read. As stated, about to become mandatory training material for the sales force.

I'm a reporter and I was working on a series about antibiotic resistance. This book provided me with a wealth of information I was able to use in my story. Very insightful--at times very discouraging--but nonetheless, a great read!

Interesting to read. Important for the public to know!

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