

Hospitals still overusing antibiotics, feds say

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Amid rising fears about "superbugs" that are resistant to antibiotics, hospitals are still overusing antibiotics to treat patients.

In what is believed to be the first study of its kind, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that antibiotic use overall has not changed in recent years among 300-plus hospitals - while, the use of some kinds of antibiotics has gone up significantly.

"This trend is worrisome in light of the rising challenge of [antibiotic resistance](#)," CDC scientists wrote in the journal *JAMA Internal Medicine*, which recently published the findings.

On Wednesday, the United Nations General Assembly was expected to discuss growing concerns about superbugs - microbes that have developed a resistance to the arsenal of antibiotics frequently prescribed for many different infections. The UN General Assembly rarely tackles [health issues](#) in its meetings, but the antibiotic issue has become one of global concern.

Despite increased awareness of the risks of overprescribing antibiotics, the hospitals in the study didn't change the rate of their antibiotic use between 2006 and 2012, researchers noted. And the use of certain classes of [antibiotics](#) - the newer, more powerful ones - went up significantly over the same period.

"Our findings can help inform national efforts to improve antibiotic use by suggesting key targets for improvement interventions," the researchers wrote. "Because inappropriate antibiotic use increases the risk of antibiotic resistance and other adverse patient outcomes, continued monitoring of antibiotic use is critical to future improvements in patient safety."

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