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Canadian Chicken Has Alarming Amounts of Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria

posted by: Annie Urban 5 hours ago



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Do you know what is in your meat?

If you buy your meat at a supermarket in Canada, it is likely to be contaminated with multiple antibiotic-resistant superbugs like salmonella and E. coli. Researchers with CBC's Marketplace bought 100 samples of chicken from major brands at large chain supermarkets in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver and tested them for bacteria. Their findings: Two-thirds of the chicken samples tested had bacteria, which often happens with raw chicken, but all of that bacteria was resistant to at least one antibiotic. Some of the samples were resistant to between six and eight types of antibiotics.

Some of the brands included in this study were:

- Lilydale: resistant to 5 antibiotics.
- Maple Leaf Prime: resistant to 6 antibiotics.
- Rava: resistant to 7 antibiotics.
- Loblaws Club Pack: resistant to 8 antibiotics.

Some experts say that chicken in Canada get antibiotics every day as part of their feed, regardless of whether they are sick or not. The Chicken Farmers of Canada claim that there is only "judicious" use of antibiotics (and not simply routine use of it).

The Marketplace researchers even tested brands advertised as "antibiotic-

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free," such as Loblaws "Free From" brand, as well as organic chicken brands. They were alarmed to find that even these chickens had antibiotic-resistant bugs. One organic farmer in Quebec said that they do not use any antibiotics at all, but they do buy conventional chicks (which are then raised organic) and he says the only conceivable way his meat could have been exposed to antibiotics is if the eggs were injected with antibiotics before he takes the chicks.

Researchers are very concerned about these findings because the overuse of antibiotics in meat being consumed by Canadians means that oral antibiotics no longer work to fight the superbugs with which people are infected. One researcher from McMaster University who was interviewed on *Marketplace* said: "It's the bugs against the drugs and the bugs are winning." Experts are particularly concerned because half of the salmonella bugs found were resistant to Ceftiofur, one of the only antibiotics that can be used to treat food poisoning in pregnant women and children.

The Chicken Farmers of Canada are not particularly concerned and say that if people cook their chicken properly, they will not be infected with the bugs. However, most people are not as careful as they think they are when handling raw meat. People are also often infected with these superbugs due to unsafe food handling practices in restaurants or other food service businesses where they eat.

**Are you concerned about the overuse of antibiotics in livestock? How has this or will this change your eating habits?**

*Note: Source for all findings in this post is the CBC's Marketplace on television on Friday, February 11, 2011 and the accompanying CBC news article.*

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*Annie blogs about the art and science of parenting at the PhD in Parenting blog.*

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Sue H. says  
Feb 14, 2011 8:53 PM

Very scary. Best to try and buy your meats from a local farmer whom you can trust.

send green star



Philippa P. says  
Feb 14, 2011 7:49 PM

Yet another good reason to go vegetarian.

send green star



Gwendolyn No Fwds says  
Feb 14, 2011 6:59 PM

Whether one eats meat, chicken specifically, or not we all may be affected by antibiotic resistant bacteria. My Father has had his whole life changed by Mersa, an antibiotic resistant strain of staff infection. He now has a bag on his side and has had so many surgeries and doctors. He has nearly died several times. If it weren't for his overpowering will to live I'm sure we would have lost him long ago. At one point he was in ICU for over 3 weeks. This is a serious problem. Animals should not receive unneeded meds, PERIOD!!!

send green star



. says  
Feb 14, 2011 6:23 PM

so sad sometimes that we feel the need for antibiotics first, before even illness. Not that I'm promoting the loss of life or livelihood, but with so little trust in our health, IE; jumping the gun on the meds. How can we go on like this?

The fact is they do it to PREVENT illness, meaning they haven't a clue on how it is formed or spread in the first place. Not a clean environment that is why those cameras in the slaughter/feed house are being introduced.

We can't act upon that which we choose to ignore.....but how do we know in the first place? Thanks for the reminder!

send green star



Wassiliisia G. says  
Feb 14, 2011 4:54 PM

yuck

send green star

cecily w. says  
Feb 14, 2011 4:39 PM

Go veg and you don't have to deal with it.

send green star



Sue Matheson says  
Feb 14, 2011 4:31 PM

ick.

send green star

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