



ASTAG Antimicrobial Resistance importance ratings

We are committed to antimicrobial stewardship, promoting optimal antimicrobial prescribing to facilitate the appropriate use of antimicrobials to decrease the incidence of antimicrobial resistance. Antibacterial selection should take into account the in-vitro susceptibility results (when available), clinical information (including the site of infection), and Australian Strategic and Technical Advisory Group on Antimicrobial Resistance (ASTAG) importance ratings. Antibacterials of lower importance should be used preferentially, to reduce the risk of problematic drug resistance.

The more commonly used antimicrobials of low importance and used preferentially as first line therapy include Penicillin, Amoxicillin, Doxycycline, Neomycin, Trimethoprim sulphonamides, Chloramphenicol, and Oxytetracycline.

Antimicrobials of medium importance and therefore only to be used if there is a compelling reason not to use low importance antimicrobials include Amoxicillin/clavulanate, Cephalexin, Cephazolin, Gentamicin, Clindamycin, Cloxacillin and Metronidazole.

Antimicrobials of high importance and therefore only to be used in exceptional circumstances, after culture and sensitivity testing, and if there is no alternative, include Cefovecin, Ceftiofur, Fluoroquinolones (Enrofloxacin, Marbofloxacin, Pradofloxacin, Ciprofloxacin etc), Amikacin, Azithromycin, Vancomycin, Ticarcillin, Rifampicin, and Polymixin B.

Online resources are available through the Australian Government Antimicrobial Resistance website and The University of Melbourne. Posters and other visual charts are available for download through The University of Melbourne website.

Australian Veterinary Prescribing Guidelines: <https://vetantibiotics.fvas.unimelb.edu.au/about/resources/>

Antimicrobial Importance ratings: <https://www.amr.gov.au/resources/importance-ratings-and-summary-antibacterial-uses-human-and-animal-health-australia>