

*What Has Dr. Shook Been Reading?*

*Overkill, How Our Nations Abuse of Antibiotics and Other Germ Killers Is Hurting Your Health and What You Can Do About It.*

By Dr. Kimberly M. Thompson with Debra Fulghum Bruce.

Rodale 2002

The first antibiotic, penicillin, was a true wonder drug, that magic bullet in the fight against infection. Four years after drug companies began mass-producing penicillin in 1942, Doctors began to see penicillin resistant bacterial infections. As it turns out these happy frolicking critters can learn and adapt. In fact evidence suggests that the critters are winning

*Overkill*, is a crash course in germs and bacterial resistance. Germs: What are they? How do they do what they do? Author Dr. Thompson is an assistant professor of risk analysis and decision science at the Harvard University of Public Health. Her concern that the consumer is not getting all the information they need to avoid and prevent illness – a concern shared by many healthcare providers - - inspired her to write *Overkill*.

Dr. Thompson wants the people, the consumer, the mom's and dad's of this world to understand that the more often a germ is exposed to an antibiotic the greater the chances that germ will learn to outsmart that antibiotic. Today even common illnesses such as bronchitis, cystitis and sinus infections are increasingly harder to treat. Because of this, it is essential that antibiotics be taken only when necessary and then only as directed. Exactly as directed.

Did you know that 80% of earaches are viral not bacterial? Antibiotics are useless against viruses, as well many types of bronchitis, most sinus infections and the common cold. The virus will create the perfect environment for growing a secondary bacterial infection. Deal with the virus and you reduce your chances of secondary infection and the need for antibiotics.

For the purpose of this book, Dr. Thompson has selected 31 common illnesses and made recommendations for home treatment. Rest, cleanliness and staying hydrated are reoccurring remedies. Other recommendations lean strongly toward conventional western medicine and include vaccinations and the appropriate use of antibiotics. She does however acknowledge the realm of "alternative medicine" and has recruited Chris D. Meletis, N.D., Dean of naturopathic medicine and chief medical officer at the National College of Naturopathic Medicine in Portland, Oregon to provide recommendations of preventive, herbal and other alternative remedies.

There is a long discussion on childcare facilities and ways to keep your kids healthy, food handling, home hygiene, safe travel, hospitals and special considerations for the immune compromised individual are just a few of the topics covered. There is even a recipe section for homemade cleaning products.

All in all it's a good book, with good information. It missed some of my favorite remedies but then as I mentioned before, it does lean strongly toward conventional western medicine.

Everyone could learn a lot about staying healthy by reading *Overkill*.

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