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ANTIMICROBIALS Help Protect Public Health

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Microorganisms, such as bacteria, viruses, and fungi, can sometimes cause diseases that make humans and animals sick. Antimicrobials, also known as biocides, play a crucial role in protecting public health by helping to prevent the growth and spread of disease-causing microbes. Unlike antibiotics that treat sickness in the body, antimicrobial biocides help kill and control microbes on surfaces and in water. Here are a few ways that antimicrobials help protect public health:

1 Public Spaces

Public spaces, such as gyms, buses, and malls, bring together many people (and germs!). The regular use of antimicrobial disinfectants and sanitizers can help kill many disease-causing viruses (like the flu), bacteria (*E. coli and Salmonella*), fungi (such as mold), and other microbes that can make people sick.

2 Hospitals and Medical Facilities

Hospitals are high-risk areas where patients are particularly vulnerable to pathogens. Using antimicrobials on surfaces, medical equipment, and water systems, can help healthcare facilities effectively kill or inhibit the growth and spread of harmful microorganisms. Maintaining a clean and safe hospital environment is important to reduce the risk of hospital-acquired infections and the spread of other diseases.

3 Natural Disasters

When floods, earthquakes, and other natural disasters occur, water supplies are often contaminated with harmful microbes. To help prevent the spread of disease, health departments, health authorities, and public water systems use antimicrobials to disinfect water, surfaces, and other areas to help reduce the risk of infections and outbreaks following a disaster.

4 Safe Drinking Water

Antimicrobials are regularly used to treat public drinking water systems. Drinking water disinfection help prevent outbreaks of waterborne illnesses, such as typhoid and cholera. This helps ensure that the water supplied to the public meets health and safety standards.