**Averting A Post-Antibiotic Apocalypse**

**Antibiotic resistant bacteria could become a bigger killer than cancer by 2050, unless drastic action is taken to curb the excessive use of existing drugs and spur the development of new ones. That's the stark conclusion of a major two-year review of antimicrobial resistance. The dwindling arsenal of effective antibiotics could make minor infections and routine surgeries like C-sections life-threatening. The report estimates that drug resistant superbugs, which already kill 700,000 people a year, could claim as many as 10 million lives a year by the middle of the century. Just this week, researchers reported finding a "superbug" resistant to antibiotics of last resort in a Pennsylvania woman, suggesting that such untreatable bacteria may become prevalent in the U.S. The study's authors, who were commissioned by the British government, make several proposals. They advise governments to set strict limits on the use of antibiotics in agriculture and to provide significant financial incentives for pharmaceutical companies to develop new antibiotics. They also recommend launching a global awareness campaign to increase understanding of antimicrobial resistance. "We need to inform in different ways, all over the world, why it's crucial we stop treating our antibiotics like sweets," study author Jim O'Neill tells BBC.com. "If we don't solve the problem, we are heading to the dark ages, (and) we will have a lot of people dying." *(The Week magazine, June 10, 2016)***