

NEWS

Be wise with antibiotics

GREENMEADOWS Medical has joined the fight against antibiotics resistance.

The practice has partnered with NPS MedicineWise in an antibiotics awareness campaign.

Nurses and doctors last week wore purple T-shirts with the NPS MedicineWise slogan antibiotic resistance fighter. There are more than 29 million antibiotics prescriptions in Australia each year.

NPS MedicineWise clinical services specialist Lesley Burrett said a lot of those prescriptions were unnecessary.

"We know resistance is becoming a worldwide problem," she said.

There is a common perception in the community that antibiotics are a cure all despite being ineffective against viruses such as those which cause the common cold.

Individuals can take action by not expecting antibiotics when they have viral infections and only taking antibiotics when prescribed.

Misuse of antibiotics may lead to their failure in the



Lesley Burrett, doctors Tetyana Seppi, Anthony Wan, Madeleine Holloway, Nevenka Stancevic, Julia Edmund, Robert Clarke and Chris Timms.

future. Infections that were once easy to treat may become untreatable without effective antibiotics.

Greenmeadows Medical's Dr Robert Clarke said infections were a common presentation in general practice.

"The important thing for

us is to be able to work out what sort of infections they have and what are the best treatments," he said.

"We can generally very well work out what the germ is and can advise on the best treatment for that particular germ."

Most respiratory tract infections are viral in origin. Antibiotics don't kill viruses.

Antibiotics are only effective against bacterial infections.

Dr Clarke said when needed, doctors would select the most appropriate antibiotic

for the patient as part of the treatment.

FACT BOX:

NPS MedicineWise advises people can prevent antibiotic resistance by:

- Understanding most people don't need antibiot-

ics for colds and flu because they are caused by viruses

- Telling your doctor you only want an antibiotic at the right time as prescribed by your doctor

- Taking simple steps to avoid infections and prevent them from spreading.