

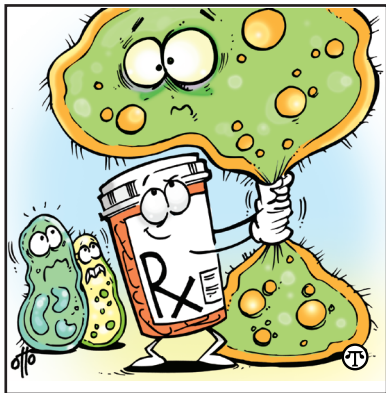
ADVANCES IN HEALTH CARE

Hundreds Of New Ways To Fight Infection

(NAPSA)—Scientists have made huge strides against infectious diseases, which until the 1920s were the leading cause of death in the United States. Still, more than 9.5 million people worldwide die each year from infectious diseases. Of particular concern today are virulent forms of “superbugs” that have mutated and grown resistant to available antibiotics. Responding to this need, America’s biopharmaceutical research companies have nearly 400 new medicines and vaccines in the pipeline to fight infectious diseases.

This is especially encouraging as infectious diseases have become more aggressive. For example, only 2 percent of staph infections in the U.S. were drug resistant in 1974. The percentage jumped to 63 percent by 2004. Staph infections now kill more people in the U.S. than AIDS, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. When staph bacteria spread to the bloodstream, a life-threatening illness known as sepsis can occur. Sepsis, which has increased by 91.3 percent over the last 10 years, is expected to kill 215,000 people in the U.S. this year. But there are 18 new medicines and vaccines to treat or prevent staph infections and sepsis that are currently in development, according to the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) report.

Scientists are also developing treatments for infectious diseases as varied as herpes, rabies, meningitis and SARS. A total of 145 vaccines are in development to prevent a variety of infections, including a number of forms of



“Superbugs” and bioterrorism agents are among the targets of new medicines now being tested.

influenza. Additionally, 88 antibiotics and 96 anti-virals are in development.

Further, scientists are also working to thwart the potential devastation of biological warfare agents. Ten separate treatments for anthrax and three for smallpox are in development. Although medical progress eradicated naturally occurring smallpox in humans worldwide by 1980, concerns remain that the virus could be used as a bioterrorism weapon.

PhRMA represents the country’s leading pharmaceutical research and biotechnology companies, which are devoted to inventing medicines that allow patients to live longer, healthier and more productive lives. Learn more at www.PhrMA.org. For information on how innovative medicines save lives, visit www.innovation.org. For information on the Partnership for Prescription Assistance, visit www.pparx.org.