

Editorial: McDonald's makes a healthy choice

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When it comes to familiar icons, McDonald's ranks high in symbolism around the nation and the world. McDonald's is also the world's largest restaurant chain. The company deserves praise for a decision just announced that cannot have been easy to take but is important: to curtail the use of antibiotics in chicken products sold in the United States.

Antibiotics, drugs that fight bacterial infections, came into widespread use after World War II and are now a mainstay of human health. They save lives and enable all kinds of medical advances. But at the same time that antibiotics became known as wonder drugs, bacteria gradually adapted and started to overcome the drugs, a phenomenon known as antibiotic resistance.

For several decades, it didn't seem to be a big problem because new antibiotics were being discovered. But now resistance is reaching crisis proportions and the pipeline of new discoveries has dwindled.

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