

ESBL killing people, swine

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An antibiotic-resistant bacteria called Extended Spectrum Beta Lactamase is killing people and swine in Denmark.

Nyhedsavisen newspaper said the bacteria, which has infected more than 350 people in Denmark since 2003, has been implicated in the deaths of several cancer and liver disease patients, the Copenhagen Post reported. Hvidovre Hospital hospital outside Copenhagen said eight patients were diagnosed as having the ESBL bacteria in 2006 and the number jumped 50 percent last year.

Denmark's health officials said the bacteria is being transmitted to humans through pigs but they're not sure how farmers and veterinarians who are not eating infected meat are becoming infected.

"There's no proof that they are being infected on the farms, but where else would they get it?" Luca Guardabassi of the University of Copenhagen said. "It's very worrying that the increased use of antibiotics in agriculture has allowed these resistant strains to spread."

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