

# ID physicians call for 10 new antibiotics by 2020

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As the deaths and suffering caused by antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections continue to rise around the world, the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) is urging a global commitment to develop 10 new antibiotics by 2020, known as the 10 x '20 initiative, to address this public health crisis and safeguard patients' health.

The plea for U.S. and global action comes in a statement—published in the April 15 issue of *Clinical Infectious Diseases* and available online this week—that outlines the dangers and recommends how to address what the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) has identified as one of the three greatest threats to human health. The IDSA statement is available at [www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1086/652237](http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1086/652237). Recent studies have shown there are few antibiotics in the development pipeline that would offer benefits over existing drugs. The existing drugs we do have available are in danger of becoming ineffective as bacteria increasingly develop resistance.

"Prior generations gave us the gift of antibiotics," said David Gilbert, MD, FIDSA, chair of IDSA's Antimicrobial Availability Task Force, which authored the IDSA statement. "Today, we have a moral obligation to ensure this global treasure is available for our children and future generations."

Solving the antibiotic pipeline problem will require the engagement of global political, scientific, medical, industry and policy leaders to determine the right combination of incentives necessary to drive

innovation in this diminishing segment of the pharmaceutical market. The ultimate goal must be the creation of a sustainable research and development enterprise that can deliver new antibiotics on an on-going basis. Resistant organisms will continue to develop in perpetuity, so we must have a plan in place to replenish our arsenal of drugs into the foreseeable future.

"The lack of new [antibiotics](#) in the pipeline threatens to leave physicians around the world without the tools they need to effectively treat patients, which could change the practice of medicine as we know it," said IDSA President Richard Whitley, MD, FIDSA. "Advances that we now take for granted, such as surgery, cancer treatment, transplants, and the care of premature babies, could become impossible as our antibiotic options dwindle. If we can initiate a global commitment to achieve this 10 x '20 goal, we will take a giant step toward protecting and ensuring the health of patients worldwide."

Sadly, this commitment will come too late for many patients and families who have already suffered the effects of antibiotic-resistant infections, underscoring the need for quick action to prevent even more suffering. These patients include:

Tom Dukes, 52, an active single dad whose life was torn apart by a painful and antibiotic-resistant *Escherichia coli* infection three months ago. After emergency surgery and intensive treatment, today Tom is finally on the mend.

Simon Sparrow, a 15-month old baby who died in 2004 after a terrifying battle with a methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) infection. Simon's mother, Everly Macario, has since devoted her career in public health to raising awareness of and preventing MRSA.

Bryce Smith, who at 14-months-old contracted MRSA pneumonia in

2005 and nearly died. Bryce spent many harrowing weeks in an intensive care unit as doctors struggled to save his life and his parents, Katie and Scott, waited in agony for their son to recover.

Provided by Infectious Diseases Society of America

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