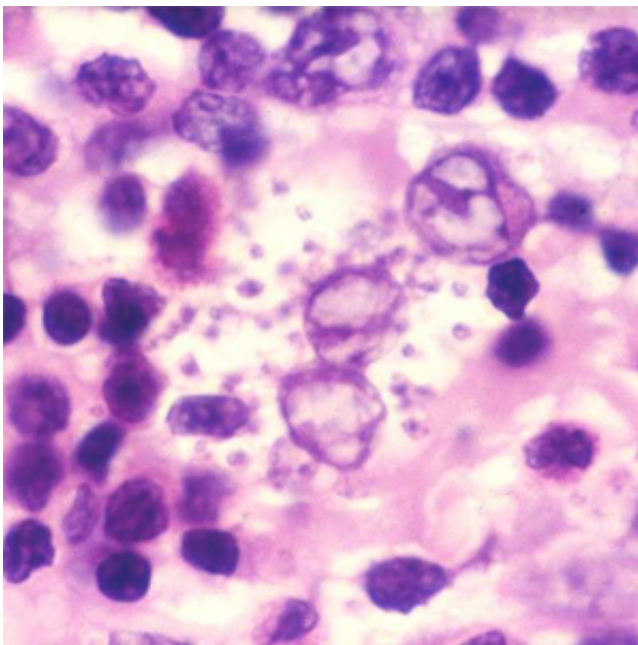


# Combination therapies are a cost-effective alternative when treating visceral leishmaniasis

September 16 2013

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Visceral leishmaniasis is the second-deadliest parasitic disease after malaria. Each year, thousands fall victim among poor and marginalised populations in low-income countries. Filip Meheus is the first to detail the economic aspects of the disease in India, Nepal and Sudan. On Monday 16 September, Meheus will receive a PhD title at the University of Nijmegen for his research at the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM)

in Antwerp.

Visceral leishmaniasis has become harder to control, because current treatments increasingly fail (like in Nepal with resistance to the drug miltefosine).

Meheus shows that combination therapies (the use of multiple drugs) is a cost-effective alternative to the current first-line treatments. This is mainly due to the shorter duration of treatment and the lower cost of the drugs used for combination therapies.

Combination therapies would also alleviate the enormous [economic damage](#) the disease causes in families and relieve the workload in hospitals. However, additional efforts are needed to further drop prices of some drugs (like liposomal amphotericin B) and diagnose and treat patients more quickly.

"This disease wrecks patients twice, both physically and financially. The study results offer some tools to assist them better, even where the needs are huge and the means limited," said Meheus.

The article is titled "The economic analysis of [visceral leishmaniasis control](#)."

**More information:** [www.itg.be/internet/dl/Economi...trol-FilipMeheus.pdf](http://www.itg.be/internet/dl/Economi...trol-FilipMeheus.pdf)

Provided by Institute of Tropical Medicine Antwerp

Citation: Combination therapies are a cost-effective alternative when treating visceral leishmaniasis (2013, September 16) retrieved 24 April 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-09-combination-therapies-cost-effective-alternative-visceral.html>

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