

Study shines the spotlight on schistosomiasis

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In a special free issue of *Future Medicinal Chemistry*, leading experts explore current and potential new treatment options for the deadly neglected tropical disease schistosomiasis.

In this issue, experts discuss [drug](#) discovery and development advances towards addressing [schistosomiasis](#), also known as bilharzia, a disease caused by parasitic worms. Schistosomiasis is the world's most deadly neglected tropical disease, killing an estimated 280,000 people annually in the African region alone, and is the second most common parasitic disease after malaria. Clinicians now rely solely on the drug praziquantel for treatment and control of schistosomiasis.

"This special focus issue of *Future Medicinal Chemistry* is impressive for the breadth of contributor expertise in the field of schistosomiasis," said guest editor Conor Caffrey, of the University of California, San Francisco, USA. "Insight is provided by leaders directly involved in disease surveillance and drug implementation programs and by key research innovators and facilitators working in academia, industry and non-governmental organizations."

The issue delivers a wide range of content, including opinion pieces on emerging aspects of the field, such as the rise of open source [drug discovery](#) models in neglected disease treatment, and high quality reviews on new antischistosomal drug candidates, as well as discussion on the existing treatment, praziquantel. While known as the "wonder drug" for treating this disease, praziquantel is not without its drawbacks, which the [medicinal chemistry](#) community is working to address. In

addition, the widespread use of the drug has led to fears that clinical resistance might soon emerge, serving to emphasize the need for alternative treatments.

"The topics covered here communicate not just the excellence and breadth of the research being undertaken but also the spirit of cooperation, dynamism and 'can-do' attitude in a field that has languished somewhat in attention relative to other diseases of poverty," commented Caffrey.

"In view of the lack of funds in this field, we decided to make this special issue free to access in the hope that it will encourage further research towards the [treatment](#) and control of schistosomiasis," said Hannah Coaker, managing commissioning editor of *Future Medicinal Chemistry*.

More information: www.future-science.com/toc/fmc/7/6

Provided by Future Science Group

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