

Swiss report highlights danger of drug-resistant tuberculosis

November 13 2015



(HealthDay)—Although antibiotics have largely eradicated tuberculosis (TB) in the United States in recent decades, researchers say evidence is mounting that the bacteria is becoming increasingly resistant to these medications. Details of a recent Swiss case are reported in the Nov. 12 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Sebastien Gagneux, Ph.D., head of tuberculosis research with the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute at the University of Basel, and colleagues report the case of a patient in Switzerland who was diagnosed in 2010 with a strain of TB that was resistant to seven different first- and second-choice antibiotics.

Between 2011 and 2012, the patient was given bedaquiline, alongside four standard antibiotics, and by 2013 he was considered to be free of

the disease, the researchers said. However, five months after his treatment ended, the patient had a relapse, at which point his infection was deemed to be bedaquiline-resistant. In 2014, he was then given delamanid. But again, resistance developed within a matter of months.

The patient then had surgery to remove the affected part of his lung, "and that is really what saved his life," Gagneux told *HealthDay*. "So really, this case suggests that we're dealing with a serious [public health threat](#)," he added. "It's rare. Most people won't get drug-resistant TB. But for those who do, the risk of drug failure is real. And frankly, it has been such a long time since we last saw new and proven drugs coming online that it's going to be quite difficult to play catch up."

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Citation: Swiss report highlights danger of drug-resistant tuberculosis (2015, November 13)
retrieved 19 April 2024 from
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-11-swiss-highlights-danger-drug-resistant-tuberculosis.html>

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