

WHO report is 'major step forward' in fight against drug-resistant bacteria

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A new report by the World Health Organization lays out, for the first time, which antibiotic-resistant bacteria pose the greatest risk to global health and urgently need new effective treatments.

The report was chaired by Prof. Evelina Tacconelli, executive committee member of the European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ESCMID) in collaboration with the WHO and with input from several ESCMID experts.

The WHO Global priority list of [antibiotic-resistant bacteria](#) to guide research, discovery, and development of new antibiotics report is targeted at pharmaceutical companies, research institutions and policy-makers around the world. It is part of broader efforts to tackle the rising tide of infections that have become resistant to the drugs commonly used to treat them.

Prof. Tacconelli said: "Antibiotic-resistant infections have a major impact on patients' quality of life and are associated with high death rates.

"Modern medicine relies on antibiotics to treat infections and to prevent them in high risk patients. This includes transplant recipients or those affected by cancer, as well as in patients receiving common procedures such hip-replacements and Caesarean sections. However, the current pipeline of antibiotics is almost empty.

"This report marks a major step forward in identifying which bacteria pose the greatest risk for patient care because of a lack of effective treatments. We hope that it will drive governments and research groups working in antibiotic development to set the right research priorities that will reduce the burden of [antibiotic-resistant infections](#) globally."

The report categorizes bacteria into 'critical', 'high' and 'medium' priority groups. The bacteria listed as in need of urgent treatment solutions include *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Acinetobacter baumannii* and *Enterobacteriaceae* which are resistant to multiple antibiotics and responsible for severe infections such as pneumonia and sepsis, mainly in hospitalised patients.

Resistant bacteria that also affect healthy people outside hospitals are included in the "high" priority group. These include *methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), *Salmonella* (responsible for food-poisoning) and *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (the sexually transmitted bacteria responsible for gonorrhoea).

The development of the list has been achieved through an extensive review of the evidence and surveillance data from all WHO regions. It includes existing databases from guidelines such as the those developed by ESCMID on reducing the spread of multidrug resistant Gram-negative [bacteria](#) in hospitalised patients .

More information: [www.who.int/medicines/publicat ... sistant-bacteria/en/](http://www.who.int/medicines/publications/antibiotic-resistant-bacteria/en/)
[www.clinicalmicrobiologyandinf ... m/article/S1198-743X](http://www.clinicalmicrobiologyandinfection.com/article/S1198-743X)

Provided by European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases

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