

Romania hospital says 39 babies now diagnosed with superbug

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In this Aug. 16, 2010 file photo a nurse looks on from a window of the Giulesti hospital following a fire that left 5 newborn babies dead. Romanian health authorities on Friday, Nov. 30, 2018, temporarily closed the maternity hospital in the capital after over a dozen babies born there recently were diagnosed with a drug-resistant superbug. The Health Ministry said the hospital would stop admissions after the newborns were recently diagnosed with antibiotic-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*. (AP Photo/Vadim Ghirda, File)

The number of babies diagnosed with a drug-resistant superbug at a maternity hospital in Romania's capital has risen to 39, authorities said Monday.

Raluca Alexandru, spokeswoman for Giulesti Maternity [hospital](#), closed Nov. 30 due to the outbreak, said tests have confirmed the latest figure. It is triple the number of newborns diagnosed with antibiotic-resistant Staphylococcus aureus last month.

Health Minister Sorina Pintea said she will decide later this week whether to keep the hospital closed. The infants are hospitalized in three children's facilities in Bucharest. No deaths have been reported.

The [bacteria](#) often live on the skin or in the nostrils without causing symptoms but they can become dangerous if they enter the bloodstream, destroying heart valves or causing other damage. Microbiologists say up to 30 percent of humans are long-term carriers.

It is not clear how this outbreak began. Health authorities have suggested that the hospital does too many C-sections and that hygiene standards are not respected.

Eleven staff members have tested positive for the superbug. They have been suspended from work and face treatment.

In a related development, the National Authority of Quality Health Management said only 23 of 147 hospitals it had checked respected all of the approximately 500 requirements to function. It said 106 facilities partially respected the requirements.

The requirements include issues such as hygiene, patient confidentiality, personnel structure, budget, fire risk and data protection.

A statement said the results explained the poor public image of Romania's health care system.

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