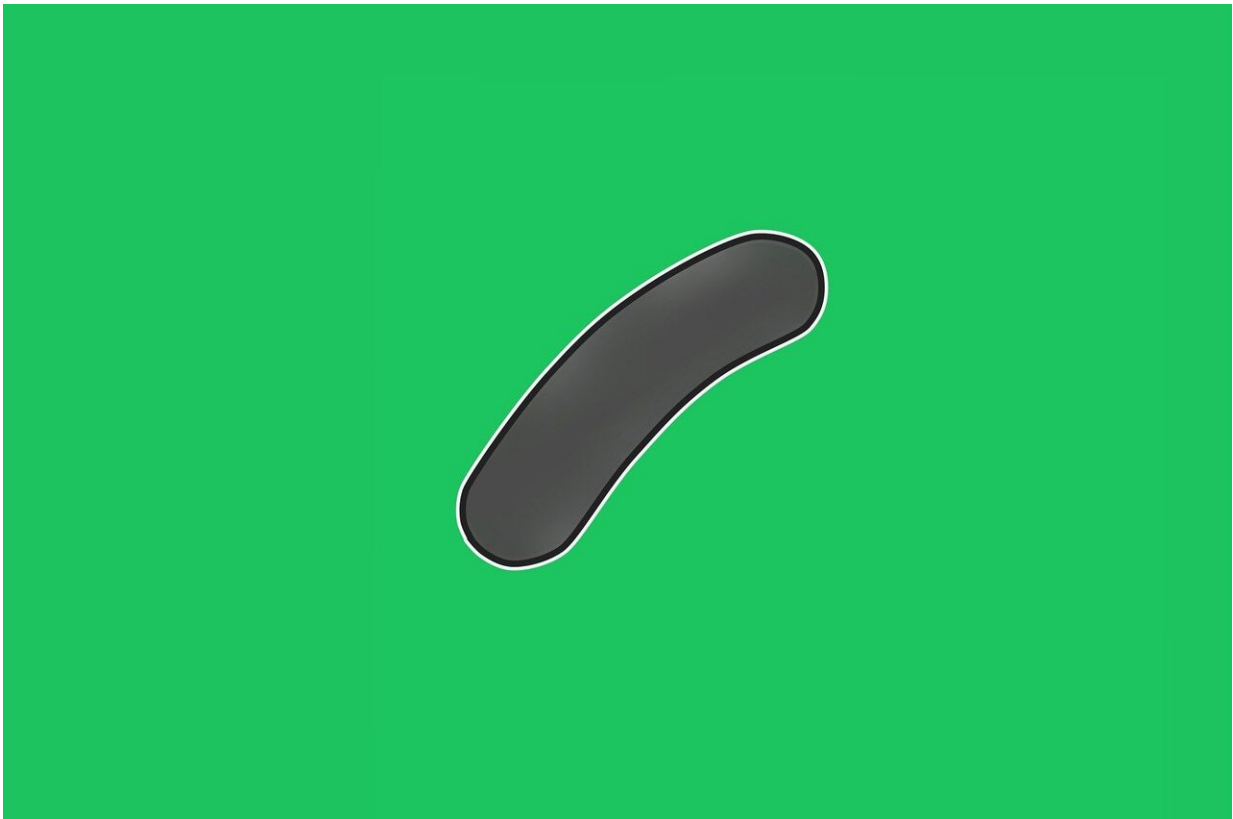


# TB could be conquered by common painkillers, research reveals

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Aspirin could be used to treat the world's deadliest infectious disease, according to new research conducted by Dr. Elinor Hortle at the Centenary Institute in Sydney.

Tuberculosis—which affects a third of the global population—currently kills two million people every year. The spread of multi-drug resistant strains mean antibiotics are becoming less effective.

To find new treatment options, Elinor infected zebrafish with a close relative of tuberculosis to determine how the deadly bacterium survives within its host.

Her research showed that platelets—the cells which form blood clots—interact with the bacteria, helping them evade the host's [immune system](#).

"What this means is that we can use cheap, safe anti-platelet drugs like Aspirin to block this interaction, and to stop the bacteria from growing," she says.

Her research showed that zebrafish treated with aspirin or other anti-platelet drugs had half the bacterial growth of untreated fish. This is the first time that platelets have been linked to a direct effect on bacterial growth in an [animal model](#).

"What's exciting is that this finding has prompted other researchers to look back into hospital records of people who had TB," Elinor says.

"They show that patients who took [aspirin](#) while they were infected had better outcomes than those who didn't. That's a really good sign that what we've found in the fish might also be true in people."

She adds that further research is needed to determine whether the same outcomes will be seen in humans.

Provided by Freshscience

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