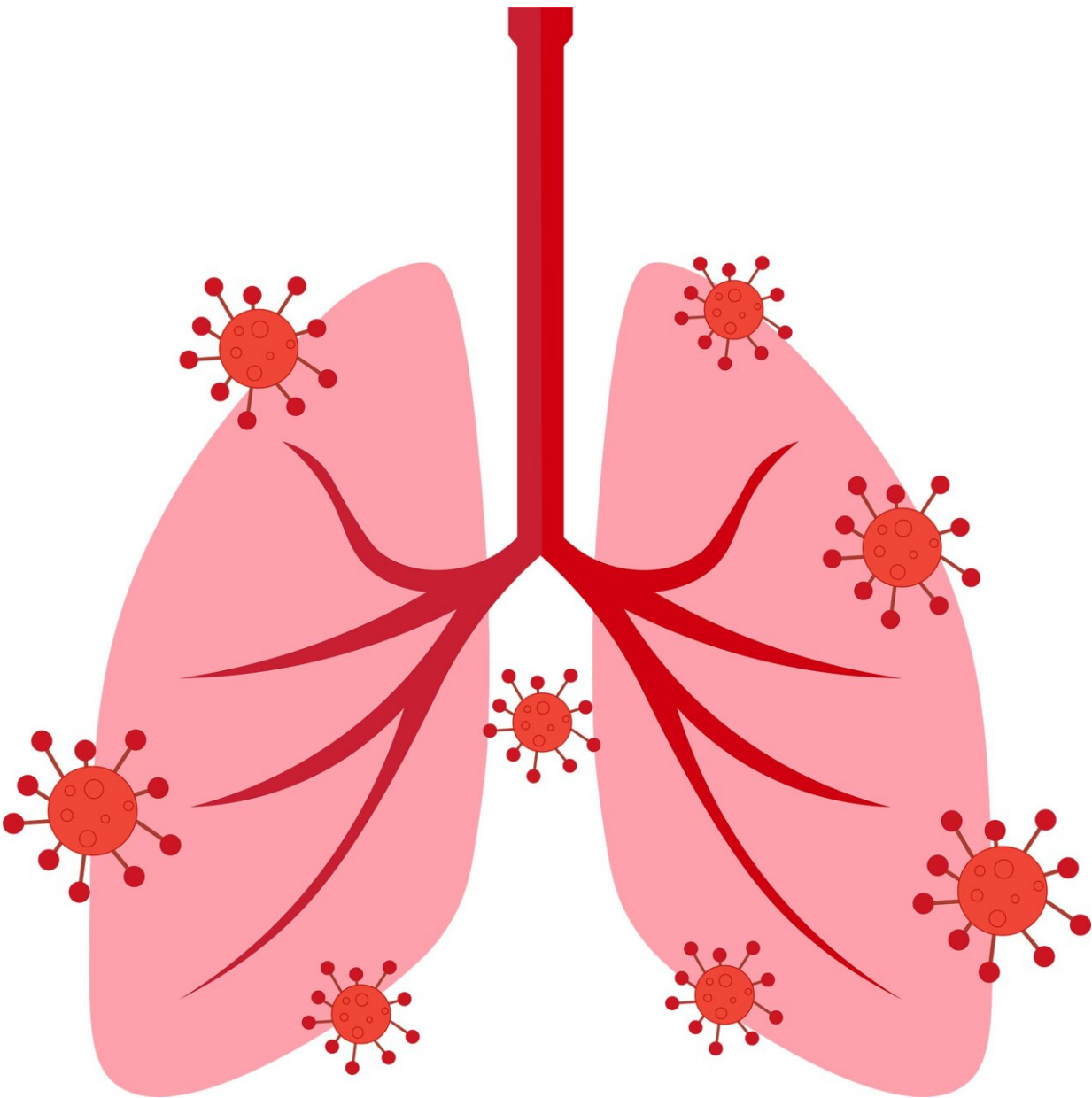


Azithromycin shows promise for putting asthma into remission

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Researchers at HMRI and the University of Newcastle have evaluated a drug called azithromycin, a macrolide antibiotic, to test if it would put moderate to severe asthma into remission.

Professor Peter Gibson from the HMRI Asthma and Breathing program says the findings were very promising.

"Remission in adults with asthma is a relatively new concept and a less researched area but it has recently gained attention. Recent studies have found that [remission](#) is possible in severe asthma treated with highly effective biologics therapies, a new class of drugs," Professor Gibson said.

"We've taken a different approach by testing another type of drug. We're the only people in the world to have tested this drug and we have confirmed that remission can be achieved in up to 50 percent of moderate to severe asthma patients treated with long-term azithromycin," Professor Gibson said.

These findings are published in the journal [Chest](#).

"This is the first study reporting remission can be achieved using drugs other than biologics. Biologics are injection medicines, cost-prohibitive in low- and [middle-income countries](#) (approx. \$500 to \$3000/month) and restricted to most severe cases in high-income countries.

"Azithromycin—the drug we tested—is a low-cost oral therapy (approximately \$15/week) and a guideline-recommended treatment for moderate to [severe asthma](#). So, these findings have numerous

implications," lead author, Dr. Dennis Thomas, said.

"Achieving remission has huge health and [economic impact](#) as exacerbations are completely abolished, symptoms are fully under control, and the need for risky drugs such as corticosteroids is totally eliminated. Future asthma treatment should aim to achieve asthma remission," Dr. Thomas said.

The team is working towards developing the next-generation asthma management strategy and defining the future frontiers in asthma under the umbrella of a large research program called the FUTURE program.

More information: Dennis Thomas et al, Azithromycin Induced Asthma Remission in Adults With Persistent Uncontrolled Asthma, *Chest* (2024). [DOI: 10.1016/j.chest.2024.02.048](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chest.2024.02.048)

Provided by Newcastle University

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