

NON-FICTION TEXT: NEWS ARTICLE



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Science News

Forget Zombies! Is the Antibiotic Apocalypse coming?

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Imagine if a simple paper cut could kill you.

Scientists are warning that we could be facing an 'antibiotic apocalypse'.

This is because some bacteria are now able to fight off even the strongest antibiotics. The bacteria have become resistant. If bacteria become completely resistant to antibiotics, common infections will become untreatable and as dangerous as they were before the discovery of penicillin.

Pills given out 'like sweets'

So why aren't antibiotics working so well anymore? Research suggests that bacteria have become more and more resistant to antibiotics because we use them too often and in the wrong way.

There is evidence that doctors are giving people too many antibiotics, sometimes when they don't need them at all. Some people accuse doctors of handing them out 'like sweets', even for colds caused by viruses. Also, some patients don't finish all of their pills because they are feeling better, which helps bacteria develop resistance.

It is also claimed that farmers use too many antibiotics on their animals. Resistant bacteria develop on farms.

This resistance can then transfer to bacteria found in our bodies. In Europe, farmers have been banned from giving antibiotics to farm animals to help them grow, but this still happens in other parts of the world.

Whether for humans or animals, scientists stress that antibiotics should now only be used when absolutely necessary.

Nanobots vs Superbugs

It may sound like a rubbish sci-fi movie, but the future of fighting resistant bacteria (so-called superbugs) may be a battle between bugs and machines!

To avoid an antibiotic apocalypse, drug companies are putting lots of effort into developing a new generation of antibiotics. They are also experimenting with other kinds of medicines, some even made from insects!

It may even be possible to fight bacteria using microscopic technology. One day, doctors might inject tiny robots into your body that would fight bacteria in one-on-one combat.



Before antibiotics, the only treatment for killer diseases like tuberculosis was fresh air. Will we see scenes like this on our streets again?