

Antibiotic apocalypse could become a reality

Mankind is nearing a “post-antibiotic era”, scientists have warned after finding bacteria able to shrug off the drug of last resort, *Colistin*, raising the grim possibility of a future of untreatable infections



Escherichia coli (E. coli): Chinese and British scientists have found strain resistant to *Colistin*

■ Deaths due to antimicrobial resistance (AMR) per year compared to other major causes of death

Resistant strain, likely due to overuse in farm animals, found in pigs, raw meat, and 16 Chinese patients

10m
Level by 2050 (est)*

8.2m

700,000

60,000

120,000

130,000

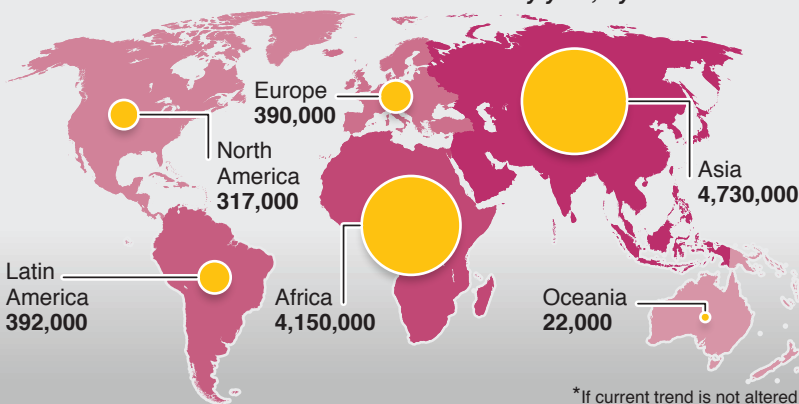
1.2m

1.4m

1.5m

Tetanus	Cholera	Measles	Road accidents	Diarrhoea	Diabetes	Cancer	AMR
60,000	120,000	130,000	1.2m	1.4m	1.5m	8.2m	10m (est)*

■ Breakdown of deaths attributable to AMR every year, by 2050*



*If current trend is not altered

Sources: The Lancet, 2014 British government Review on Antimicrobial Resistance, wire agencies

Picture: United States Department of Health and Human Services

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