

Drug resistant microorganisms getting out of control worldwide

Experts from Europe and WHO (World Health Organization) say a considerable number of infections are becoming harder to treat because of drug resistance; treatments are getting longer and more costly, and much more life-threatening. WHO urges governments, doctors, scientists, industry and civil society to take urgent and determined action to stem the spread of drug resistance.

European experts say antibiotic-resistant infections are occurring at a rate that outstrips our ability to fight them with current medications. In the European Union over 25,000 patients die annually from drug-resistant infections that even our latest antibiotics cannot destroy.

WHO Director-General Dr Margaret Chan, said last Thursday: "The message on this World Health Day is loud and clear. The world is on the brink of losing these miracle cures. In the absence of urgent corrective and protective actions, the world is heading towards a post-antibiotic era, in which many common infections will no longer have a cure and, once again, kill unabated."

WHO proposes a policy package to address drug resistance, which should include:

- The development and implementation of a thorough, well financed national plan
- Enhance surveillance and laboratory capability
- Make sure access to vital and top quality medications is uninterrupted
- Promote and regulate proper use of drugs
- Improve infection prevention and control
- Encourage research and development, and ***innovation for new tools***

We have done this before, WHO explains, with such diseases as leprosy, gonorrhoea, syphilis and TB (tuberculosis). However, as drug resistance grows and spreads relentlessly, those discoveries and medications that followed them are at risk of being useless.

Microorganisms naturally acquire resistance to medications designed to destroy them, it is a biological phenomenon. The bugs with the resistant gene thrive, become more dominant still, and eventually the medication has no effect. Drug resistance thrives on improper use of infection-fighting medicines, such as misuse, underuse and overuse of drugs.

There were over 440,000 new cases of multidrug resistant-tuberculosis in 2010. Drug-resistant TB has become a growing problem in 69 countries. Even the latest generation of drugs are becoming less effective in treating malaria. Gonorrhoea and shigella are becoming harder to treat.

The number of hospital-acquired infections that are hard to treat is growing rapidly. In the modern world, where people travel across the globe continuously and rapidly, microorganisms spread everywhere in a short time. Visit Medical News Today for the article.