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Superbugs: Drug Resistant But Not Herb Resistant

by Stephanie Whited

(NewsTarget) Superbug is becoming a household term and unfortunately, a household occurrence. The most recent headliner is the methicillin and penicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, or MRSA. Thought of mostly as a hospital acquired infection, its occurrence is showing up in schools, gyms, and daycare centers (<http://www.cnn.com/2007/HEALTH/conditions/10/16/mrsa.cdc.ap/index.html?iref=newssearch>). 21 schools in Bedford, Virginia have closed to undergo cleaning after a high school senior died (<http://www.cnn.com/2007/HEALTH/conditions/10/16/staph.death.ap/index.html>) October 15th of the infection.

It is often carried by healthy individuals without symptoms. In a mild case, MRSA affects the skin, but it can become invasive and potentially deadly when it penetrates the body usually through a break in the skin, like a cut, scrape, or wound. It infects more than 90,000 Americans a year (<http://www.cnn.com/2007/HEALTH/conditions/10/16/mrsa.cdc.ap/index.html?iref=newssearch>), and due to a resistance to antibiotics, MRSA has become hard to treat by the medical community.

It is generally accepted that MRSA has become immune to many antibiotics due to the overuse. Bacteria are smart and very good at survival. They share knowledge about antibiotics, and can even acquire the necessary encoding for resistance by scavenging the remnants of dead bacteria killed by the antibiotic (<http://health.howstuffworks.com/question561.html>).

Alternative treatments for bacterial infections are widely available, but they have not been publicized in the recent media frenzy.

One herb, Pau D'Arco (also known as *Tabebuia avellanedae*, Taheebo, Lapacho), was found by a research team at the University of Rio de Janeiro in 2003 to be an effective topical treatment of MRSA. View the abstract at PubMed (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez?Db=pubmed&Cmd=ShowDetailView&TermToSearch=12636992&ordinalpos=2&itool=EntrezSystem2.PEntrez.Pubmed.Pubmed_ResultsPanel.Pubmed_RVDocSum). It can also be used internally as a tea. The team also suggests that the herb be tested for use against cancer, a claim already made by many herbalists. It is widely available as a tea or in capsule form and can be used against *Candida*, viruses (http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0NAH/is_10_35/ai_n1579353), and parasites (<http://www.pau-d-arco.com/Dr.Mowry.html>).

So Pau D'Arco not only treats drug resistant Staph, it guards against other infections and health problems, including viruses, parasites, and possibly cancer. Antibiotics however, do not work against viruses and cancer. Instead, antibiotics "may help fungi to proliferate within the human body" (http://www.mercola.com/2003/jun/18/antibiotics_bacteria.htm), and they kill *all* types of bacteria, including the beneficial bacteria which aid in healthy digestion. A lack of beneficial bacteria has been linked with autism and bowel disorders (http://www.mercola.com/2004/may/26/good_bacteria_autism.htm).

Antibiotic use in children has been correlated with asthma and allergies, and their use can "alter the development of a child's immune system" (<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2003/10/031001064200.htm>). The same study also found that children were less likely to develop these problems if they were exposed to a dog before the age of 1.

So germ exposure can be a good thing, and all this exposure to antibiotics is actually making us weaker and making the harmful bacteria stronger! They are not only over prescribed by doctors, but they are used in agriculture and fed to livestock (http://www.ucusa.org/food_and_environment/antibiotics_and_food/). So if you are not choosing organic food, you may be taking antibiotics!

Antibacterial soaps and sanitizers create the same problem: stronger, more immune bacteria. Natural soaps wash away dirt and germs from the body (<http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/columns/?article=BNAntibacterialAnything>), but they don't help create superbugs. In addition to creating superbugs and lowering our immunity, NewsTarget recently reported that many antibacterial soaps also contain the toxic chemical triclosan which can promote cancer (<http://www.newstarget.com/022178.html>). Antibacterial soaps could also change your hormones (<http://www.mercola.com/2006/dec/2/using-antibacterial-soap-may-disrupt-your-hormones.htm>).

So before resorting to antibiotics and chemical antibacterials, first try alternatives such as Pau D'Arco, garlic, grapefruit seed extract, honey, colloidal silver, lemon, and tee tree oil. There are many others, and most natural antibiotic alternatives are safe for everyday, preventative use, unlike antibiotics.

About the author

Stephanie Whited is an independent researcher dedicated to spreading awareness about health news, proven alternative treatments, and unsafe mainstream products.

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