

Most-wanted list of dangerous bacteria

THE World Health Organization (WHO) has identified the 12 most dangerous bacteria in an effort to advance the development of new antibiotics.

"Antibiotic resistance is growing, and we are fast running out of treatment options," WHO chief innovation officer Marie-Paule Kieny said.

Pharmaceutical companies have shied away from antibiotics research because of the risk that any new medication might soon be obsolete once bacteria become

resistant to it.

"If we leave it to market forces alone, the new antibiotics we most urgently need are not going to be developed in time," Kieny said.

Governments should develop incentives for public institutions and for companies that work on new antibiotics, the WHO said in Geneva, Switzerland.

The WHO's most-wanted list is topped by bacteria that are resistant to multiple drugs and pose risks in hospitals and nursing homes where patients have weak

immune systems.

The three most dangerous bacteria are *Acinetobacter*, *Pseudomonas* and various types of *Enterobacteriaceae*, which include *E. coli*.

These three bacterial families can cause deadly infections, for example in the blood or lungs.

The other entries on the list are increasingly resistant to drugs.

The sexually transmitted disease gonorrhoea, food poisoning caused by salmonella, or dysentery caused by shigella, are all groups in this category.



The WHO's most-wanted list is topped by bacteria that are resistant to multiple drugs and pose risks in hospitals where patients have weak immune systems. — dpa

The list was developed by the WHO and the University of Tuebingen in Germany, taking into account how deadly, resistant and

infectious bacteria are; how difficult it is to treat them; and whether new drugs to fight them are being developed. — dpa