New breed of antibiotics can kill drug resistant bacteria in minutes

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A NEW breed of “pumped up” antibiotics could kill drug resistant bacteria within minutes, a study has found.

Modifying antibiotics could make them super strong and enable them to tear germ cells apart and stop infection.

Most antibiotics can take up to a day to be effective, but super strength antibiotics start working within 15 minutes and offer hope in the losing battle against hard-to-treat superbugs like MRSA.

Antibiotic resistance is a ticking bomb and by 2050 it is predicted more people will die from untreatable infections than cancer.

Scientists at University College London believe the antibiotic vancomycin – used to treat acute bacterial skin infections – could be the answer.

Senior Research Associate Dr Joseph Ndieyira explained: “Antibiotics have ‘keys’ that fit ‘locks’ on bacterial cell surfaces, allowing them to latch on. When a bacterium becomes resistant to a drug, it effectively changes the locks.

“Incredibly, we found that certain antibiotics can still ‘force’ the lock, allowing them to kill resistant bacteria because they are able to push hard enough. In fact, some of them were so strong they tore the door off its hinges, killing the bacteria instantly.”

The study was published in Scientific Reports.