Scottish Daily Mail

**March** 16, 2016 Wednesday   
Edition 1;   
Scotland

Antibiotics useless on half of **children**  
  
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**SECTION:** NEWS; Pg. 13  
  
**LENGTH:** 402 words

COMMON antibiotics are now useless at fighting bugs in almost half of British **children,**experts have warned.

About 48 per cent of youngsters with a common bladder complaint were carrying germs resistant to Ampicillin - a drug used to treat several illnesses.

Twenty-five per cent had become resistant to Trimethoprim, another common antibiotic, and 8 per cent could not be treated with Co-Amoxiclav.

It means the most often used antibiotics could soon be unusable, researchers at the University of Bristol and Imperial College London suggested.

The research, published last night in the British Medical Journal, adds to growing evidence that **antibiotic** **resistance** is creating a breed of untreatable superbugs.

Chief Medical Officer for England Dame Sally Davies has repeatedly warned that superbugs risk creating a 'public health catastrophe' on the scale of terrorism.

Her message has gained weight at the highest levels.

Prime Minister David Cameron warned that superbugs' resistance could send medicine 'back to the Dark Ages'.

Part of the problem is overuse of antibiotics, which increases the chances of bacteria becoming resistant. The study confirmed doctors' concerns - proving that E.coli bacteria remained unaffected by the drugs for six months after treatment.

The scientists focused on **children** with urinary tract infections, analysing data from 78,000 around the world. They reviewed 58 studies and assessed how many had E.coli bugs resistant to antibiotics.

Developing countries had higher rates of resistant bacteria which is blamed on antibiotics being freely available over the counter there. But even in Britain, where they are tightly controlled, almost half of **children** tested were carrying bacteria resistant to some antibiotics. In rich countries participating in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development forum, more than half the samples were resistant to Ampicillin and almost a quarter to Trimethoprim.

Three in ten were resistant to Co-Trimoxazole and 8.2 per cent showed immunity to Co-Amoxiclav. Resistance was much greater in non-OECD countries, where almost four in five samples did not respond to Ampicillin, almost 70 per cent to Co-Trimoxazole and three in five to Co-Amoxiclav.

A Department of Health spokesman said: 'We know we are using too many antibiotics. This is putting future health at risk so we must reduce the amount we are using.'

'Superbug risk on global scale'

**LANGUAGE:** ENGLISH