Honey could battle superbugs in hospitals and keep mediacl equipment free from bacteria

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Expensive manuka honey, produced by bees in New Zealand and Australia, can halt the growth of bacterial biofilms that grow on plastic

Honey could be used to battle superbugs in [NHS](http://www.mirror.co.uk/all-about/nhs) hospitals, according to scientists.

Pricey manuka honey can keep infection-prone internal medical devices such as ­catheters free of bacteria, research has found. Even low dilutions can halt the growth of bacterial biofilms – thin layers of microbes that grow on surfaces like plastic.

Thousands of NHS patients are fitted with ­catheters every year, but long-term use is linked with complications like inflammation and infection.

Research associate Professor Bashir Lwaleed, of the University of ­Southampton, said: “Catheter infection rates can account for a large proportion of hospital-acquired infections. We hope these results may offer an alternative way of preventing such infections.”

Experts, who published their findings today in Journal of Clinical Pathology, said more research was needed before the use of manuka honey can be rolled out by the NHS.

The substance, which can cost £90 a pot, is produced by [bees](http://www.mirror.co.uk/all-about/bees) foraging on the nectar of the manuka tree in New Zealand and Australia.

Some celebrities already swear by it, including actress Scarlett Johansson, 31, who uses it as a face mask, and singer Katherine Jenkins, 36, who takes it with hot water to help her voice