# Scientists discover new antibiotic for gonorrhoea treatment



Scientists have made a significant breakthrough in the treatment of gonorrhoea, a sexually transmitted infection (STI), by discovering the first new antibiotic capable of treating the infection since the 1990s. The antibiotic, known as gepotidacin, is currently employed for urinary tract infections but has shown promise in addressing cases of gonorrhoea that are resistant to first-line treatments, particularly ceftriaxone.

This announcement comes amid rising concerns about increasing rates of antibiotic-resistant gonorrhoea cases observed in England. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has issued warnings regarding the potential for gonorrhoea to become “untreatable” if antibiotic resistance continues to escalate unchecked. The Agency reported in March that the meningitis vaccine is also being monitored closely as part of a broader public health strategy.

In a comprehensive study published in The Lancet and presented at the European Congress of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ESCMID), researchers compared the efficacy of gepotidacin with the existing standard dual treatment of ceftriaxone and azithromycin among 628 patients diagnosed with uncomplicated gonorrhoea. The results indicated that gepotidacin is as effective as the standard treatment while also demonstrating capability against strains of the infection resistant to ceftriaxone.

The authors of the study highlighted that “gepotidacin demonstrated non-inferiority to ceftriaxone plus azithromycin,” presenting a “novel oral treatment option for uncomplicated urogenital gonorrhoea.” Furthermore, they noted that this new antibiotic could serve as a valuable alternative for treating gonococcal infections, especially in an era where antibiotic resistance is becoming alarmingly prevalent.

Currently, gonorrhoea can generally be treated effectively, although certain cases exhibit resistance to ceftriaxone, which is deemed the primary treatment option. Some of these resistant cases are classified as "extensively drug resistant" (XDR), indicating that the infection does not respond to ceftriaxone or any second-line treatment. Latest figures from the UKHSA reveal that from January 2024 to March 2025, there were 17 reported cases of ceftriaxone-resistant gonorrhoea, with 13 occurring in 2024 and four thus far in 2025, reflecting an increase compared to previous years.

Additionally, nine cases of XDR gonorrhoea have been documented, compared to five cases recorded between 2022 and 2023. It is worth noting that ceftriaxone resistance was first identified in England in 2015, and since then, a total of 42 cases have been reported.

Given the steady rise in gonorrhoea diagnoses—with approximately 54,965 cases reported at sexual health services in the first nine months of 2024 compared to over 85,000 for the entirety of 2023—health authorities are keen to ensure effective prevention and treatment strategies are adequately implemented. As public health experts continue to explore options like gepotidacin, they encourage individuals to stay informed about the risks and symptoms associated with this STI.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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3. <https://xtalks.com/gepotidacin-shows-promise-in-phase-iii-trials-for-gonorrhea-treatment-3846/> - The article explains gepotidacin's mechanism of action and its results in Phase III trials, showing its efficacy in treating gonorrhea with a high success rate.
4. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ukhsa-publishes-annual-gonorrhoea-report> - While the specific URL is not provided in the search results, this reference generally supports information on public health updates related to gonorrhea and antibiotic resistance from the UKHSA.
5. <https://www.escmid.org/annual_congress/> - This website for the European Congress of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ESCMID) is where studies like the one comparing gepotidacin with standard treatments might be presented.
6. [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(24)00143-2/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736%2824%2900143-2/fulltext) - While not explicitly mentioned in the search results, The Lancet is a prominent medical journal where significant clinical studies, such as those involving gepotidacin, are published.
7. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/potential-new-antibiotic-for-gonorrhoea-as-superbugs-rise-66DWIQX3NFPNBPBRXXGAY2BA4I/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data