

# Antibiotic alternative for battling meningitis-causing bacteria

May 24 2010

---

A study published online on May 24th in the *Journal of Experimental Medicine* suggests that boosting the abundance of one of the body's own proteins might be more effective than antibiotic treatment at fighting off a common meningitis-causing bacterium (*E. coli* K1).

*E. coli* K1 can lead to long-lasting neurological deficits and, in severe cases, death. The increasing prevalence of antibiotic-resistant strains coupled with the severe side effects of antibiotic treatment highlight the urgent need for new anti-bacterial therapies.

Nemani V. Prasadarao and co-workers show that injection of a natural anti-inflammatory [protein](#) called interleukin-10 protected mice against lethal infection with *E. coli* K1—even the antibiotic-resistant variety—without triggering the side effects of antibiotics.

Interleukin-10 is already used to treat adults with certain [autoimmune diseases](#). Whether it will be safe and effective in human infants infected with *E. coli* K1 remains to be seen.

**More information:** Mittal, R., et al. 2010. *J. Exp. Med.*  
[doi:10.1084/jem.20092265](https://doi.org/10.1084/jem.20092265)

Provided by Rockefeller University

Citation: Antibiotic alternative for battling meningitis-causing bacteria (2010, May 24) retrieved 21 November 2023 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2010-05-antibiotic-alternative-meningitis-causing-bacteria.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.