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Deadly drug-defying bacteria discovered

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Singapore: Doctors at the Samsung Medical center have revealed a new group of drug resistant pathogens that had affected five elderly Korean patients between 2011 and 2012.

The bacteria, extensively drug-resistant Streptococcus pneumonia, was resistant to eight different antibiotics.

The study, published in the Emerging Infectious Diseases journal, was conducted on 520 people infected with Streptococcus pneumonia.

It indicated that five of them had contracted the deadliest strain of the pathogen. Research revealed that the victims had acquired the bacterium from hospitals that nursed them. All five had been hospitalized long-term or were living in a nursing home and had compromised immune systems. One of the five had succumbed to the bacteria.

Dr Kang Cheol-in, at the infectious diseases division, Samsung Medical Center said that they had never come across any bacteria as deadly as the current Streptococcus pneumonia strain.

The entire world is grappling with the increased prevalence of antibiotic resistance. Earlier, multi drug resistant Streptococcus pneumoniae were resistant to only three to four antibiotics, however the new bacteria is reportedly resistant to major class of antibiotics like penicillin, cephalosporins and macrolides as well as tetracyclines and trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole.