

New Zealand takes significant step in fight against drug resistance in TB

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About 300 cases of TB are diagnosed in New Zealand each year



University of Otago researchers in New Zealand have discovered new ways to treat antibiotic-resistant strains of tuberculosis (TB), opening the door to new approaches for tackling the disease that kills about 4,000 people a day.

Led by PhD candidate Natalie Waller and Senior Author Dr Matthew McNeil, of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology, researchers were able to identify antibiotics that could rapidly kill drug resistant strains of TB and when combined could stop drug resistance from occurring altogether.

According to the researchers, this work demonstrates that drug resistant strains of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* have unique weaknesses, that if we can identify them, can be targeted to greatly reduce treatment times and prevent the emergence of drug resistance.

Dr McNeil says that work will now need to focus on further extending these findings into animal studies.