

Drug-resistant gonorrhea spreading in U.S.

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U.S. health officials say doctors are running out of options for treating the rapid spread of antibiotic-resistant gonorrhea.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says data from 26 U.S. cities shows the number of resistant gonorrhea cases has jumped from less than 1 percent to more than 13 percent in less than five years, the Washington Post reported.

Doctors are being told to stop treating gonorrhea with ciprofloxacin and other antibiotics in its class, known as fluoroquinolones, and go back to using cephalosporins, an older class of drugs.

"We've lost the ability to use what had been the most reliable class of antibiotics," John M. Douglas Jr., head of the CDC's division of sexually transmitted disease prevention, told The Post.

Douglas said doctors will be powerless to treat gonorrhea if the disease becomes resistant to the remaining class of drugs.

Gonorrhea infects more than 700,000 Americans each year. If untreated, the disease can lead to sterility and potentially life-threatening complications, the newspaper said.

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