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Volume 6, Issue 9, September 2006, Pages 589-601

Review

Colistin: the re-emerging antibiotic for multidrug-resistant Gram-negative bacterial infections

Dr Jian Li PhD ^a ... David L Paterson PhD ^e

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[https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099\(06\)70580-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099(06)70580-1)

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Summary

Increasing multidrug resistance in Gram-negative bacteria, in particular *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Acinetobacter baumannii*, and *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, presents a critical problem. Limited therapeutic options have forced infectious disease clinicians and microbiologists to reappraise the clinical application of colistin, a polymyxin antibiotic discovered more than 50 years ago. We summarise recent progress in understanding the complex chemistry, pharmacokinetics, and pharmacodynamics of colistin, the interplay between these three aspects, and their effect on the clinical use of this important antibiotic. Recent clinical findings are reviewed, focusing on evaluation of efficacy, emerging resistance, potential toxicities, and combination therapy. In the battle against rapidly emerging bacterial resistance we can no longer rely entirely on the discovery of

new antibiotics; we must also pursue rational approaches to the use of older antibiotics such as colistin.



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