Babies’ DNA “tweets” signal indicating bacterial infection

Babies suffering from bacterial infections like sepsis could benefit from better treatment, thanks to a ground-breaking study.

For the first time Edinburgh researchers have been able to detect and decode a signal generated from a baby’s DNA that can tell doctors whether or not a bacterial infection is present in the bloodstream.

The findings could help develop a test for bacterial infection in newborns, using a single drop of blood.

Immediate detection of such infections, which are a major cause of death among young children, is currently impossible as no simple test exists.

Accurate diagnosis of infection could limit overuse of antibiotics, which can lead to drug resistance.

The Edinburgh team identified a signal consisting of 52 molecular characters – like a biological tweet – that is specific to bacterial infection.

The researchers have spent the past decade trying to unravel the complexities of blood poisoning and its treatment among premature and full-term babies.

They say that the genome’s signal provides critical, immediate information on the infection.

Read the full, original story: Newborns’ genome issue distress signal