

Smog in Beijing contains bacteria with antibiotic-resistant genes, sparking public fears

A report that Beijing's already notorious smog contained bacteria with [antibiotic](#)-resistant genes spread through the city [in December] like pathogens in a pandemic disaster movie.

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The study, published in October, found antibiotic-resistant genetic material in the smog but no evidence of live bacteria capable of infecting anyone.

That did not make residents of Beijing feel much better, though.

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By [December 5], most Chinese news reports speculating about the threat had been [taken offline](#), replaced by [articles](#) quoting an unidentified expert from the city's Health Department advising that there was nothing to worry about.

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Though fears of airborne bacteria were unfounded, there is a growing health problem of [antibiotic resistance](#). Antibiotics are heavily overprescribed in China, doctors and researchers say.

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"We have studied DNA from bacteria in the air and found a large variety of genes that can make bacteria resistant to antibiotics, including some of the most powerful antibiotics we have," stated [Joakim Larsson, a professor of environmental pharmacology at the University of Gothenburg's Sahlgrenska Academy]. "This was a surprising finding to us, and we think it warrants further studies."

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Fear, Then Skepticism, Over Antibiotic-Resistant Genes in Beijing Smog](#)