



The germ is one of a category of bacteria that by some estimates are already killing tens of thousands of hospital patients each year. While the organisms do not receive as much attention as the one known as MRSA — for methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* — some infectious-disease specialists say they could emerge as a bigger threat.

That is because there are several drugs, including some approved in the last few years, that can treat MRSA. But for a combination of business reasons and scientific challenges, the pharmaceuticals industry is pursuing very few drugs for *Acinetobacter* and other organisms of its type, known as Gram-negative bacteria. Meanwhile, the germs are evolving and becoming ever more immune to existing antibiotics.

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