

# **UW-Madison scientists develop method for treating fungal infections**

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UW-Madison scientists have developed a new method using nylon polymers to treat fungal infections.

Worldwide, invasive fungal infections claim the lives of 1.5 million people each year, according to the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation. To make matters worse, fungal infections are becoming increasingly hard to treat due to rising resistance to existing treatments, which can be dangerously toxic even if they do work.

The difficulty with finding treatments for fungal infections relates to the cellular structure of fungi, which differs from other common microorganisms.

Bacteria, for example, are prokaryotic cells, while both human cells and fungal cells are eukaryotic, so there's more overlap between the biochemistry of fungi and that of humans. That means it can be relatively difficult to target fungal infections without harming the surrounding cells.

The nylon polymer treatment could provide a way to sidestep these issues, according to Sam Gellman, a UW-Madison professor of chemistry and lead investigator for this research.

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