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DNA

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'superbug' report

India might suffer, say city docs

Deepa Suryanarayan

The 'superbug' might hit medical tourism in the country hard, said city surgeons, who see a lot of foreigners coming to Indian hospitals for both cosmetic and corrective surgeries.

'With India becoming a global destination for medical tourism, talks of origin of resistant organisms from India are made to dissuade people from coming here for advanced treatments. I treat many people from the US, Europe and Asian countries and almost all of them have referred other friends and relatives for the same,' said Dr Mohan Thomas, cosmetic sur-

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geon, Breach Candy Hospital.

The Indian medical tourism industry is growing at an annual rate of 30%, and as per the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and McKinsey, it is predicted to earn additional revenue of \$2.2 billion by 2012. 'This is a ploy to discourage patients from seeking treatment in India, which offers them far cheaper options,' said Dr Ashwin Pathak, knee replacement surgeon.

However, most doctors also agreed that there is the possibility of drug resistance and hospital-acquired infections, and hospitals are the usual places for their appearance.

Dr Hemant Gupta, associate professor of medicine at JJ hospital, said that another problem was that, 'In India, entire families arrive in the hospital to visit a sick patient, thus increasing the chances of hospital acquired infections.'

For this reason, the patient's house is often a better environment for recovery, he said. 'We are a country with huge population and a lot of infections. Resistance pattern is bound to change with geographical change,' said Dr Gupta.