

CENTRAL CONTRA COSTA

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Fund TB treatment

A recent letter writer wrote that she was angry about "killer germs resisting the world's antibiotics." It is, she says, because of our own overuse of antibiotics.

Our overuse of antibiotics does cause problems for us here. However, the current global problem of drug resistance is different.

The lack of adequate treatment of tuberculosis in underdeveloped countries is the problem. Also, when TB patients do start to feel better they often discontinue their antibiotics because they are too expensive.

The TB germs that survive treatment are the strongest, and create the drug resistance that becomes a problem. It is these forms of TB that are multiplying rapidly and are, with fewer options, much more expensive to treat.

We would do well to provide funding for TB treatment globally, now, before it becomes impossible to treat. Reps. George Miller, Jerry McNerney, Barbara Lee and Zoe Lofgren all helped pass a bill requesting more funding for TB, but it is still not enough to end the possibility of a worldwide scourge. Rep. Ellen Tauscher was one of three Democrats who did not vote on the Hyde-Lantos bill.

**Tari Nicholson
Martinez**

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