



Intravenous news: Peter Moeller of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Hollings Marine Laboratory in Charleston, South Carolina, who is working with researchers at the Medical University of South Carolina and North Carolina State University, said the team noticed a sponge thriving in what was an otherwise dead coral reef. The team found that these bits of sponge were able to repel bacterial biofilms – a slimy substance bacteria form to help stick to surfaces.

“What we found is these (sponge) derivatives actually dispersed existing bacterial biofilms as well as inhibited production of subsequent bacterial biofilms,” Moeller said.

“This is a very exciting result when you realise that 65 to 80% of all human pathogenic infections are based on biofilms,” he added. Moeller said the team tested the substance on some of the toughest pathogens, including MRSA.

Since the compounds are non-toxic, Moeller said the team is now working with a number of medical device companies to incorporate it into the plastic materials used to make devices like stents used to prop open diseased arteries or in intravenous lines used in critically ill patients. He declined to name the companies.

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