

CPE

Carbapenemase- Producing Enterobacterales

Patient information
Leaflet



What are Carbapenamase producing Enterobacterales?

Carbapenamase producing Enterobacterales are bacteria which usually live harmlessly in the gut of people. Presence of these bacteria without symptoms is known as 'colonisation' and a colonised person is said to be a 'carrier.' However, if these bacteria get into a different part of the body e.g. the bladder, a wound or bloodstream, they can cause infection.

CPE infections can be difficult to treat because they are resistant to many antibiotics, including carbapenem antibiotics which are used to treat serious infections. Carbapenemases are enzymes (chemicals) made by some strains of bacteria which destroy carbapenem antibiotics.

How do people get CPE?

CPE can be spread from one person to another if hands are not washed thoroughly or by contact with soiled equipment and surfaces. It is therefore important that hands are washed regularly, especially after using the toilet.

CPE is common in some hospitals, both in the UK and abroad. People who have been in these hospitals may have picked up CPE from the patients who were carrying it.

Does CPE need to be treated?

Treatment is only advocated for those patients who have clinical signs of infections. If required, advice on antibiotic treatment can be obtained from your local Consultant Microbiologist.

Can it be treated?

The majority of people with CPE are 'colonised' and do not need treatment. With time it may go away on its own. If you have a CPE infection your doctor will discuss antibiotic treatment with a Consultant Microbiologist.

How can the spread be prevented?

Good hand hygiene is very important. You should wash your hands regularly or use a hand wipe especially after using the toilet or commode before meals and when they look dirty.

It is important to wash your hands before and after emptying a urine catheter bag or when changing a wound dressing. If you have a wound or a catheter, it is important not to touch them unless you have been advised to do so by your nurse.



What about when I am at home?

No special measures are required when you are at home; you should carry on as normal, maintaining good hand hygiene. Visitors, including children should wash their hands thoroughly with liquid soap and warm running water before leaving.

Remember to carry your CPE card. If you or a member of your household is admitted to hospital, staff should be informed that you have CPE and show them your card.

What is the CPE card and what should I do with it?

You should have been given the CPE card because you have tested positive for CPE. The CPE positive result is from either a screening swab taken during a recent hospital admission or from a sample of urine, sputum or a wound swab taken by your hospital doctor, GP, or nurse.

This card is very important, it lets health and social care staff know that you have previously tested positive for CPE.

You should carry this card and show it to any health and social care staff involved in your care, e.g. doctor, nurse.

For further advice either speak to the nurse looking after you, GP or
Contact: Infection Prevention and Control Team on 01502 445361

More Information:

UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA):

www.gov.uk/government/publications/carbapenemase

Compliments, concerns, or complaints

Tel: 01502 445447

Email: patientliaison@ecchcic.nhs.uk Or

write to:

PALS, East Coast Community Healthcare,
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road,
Lowestoft, NR32 1DE

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