

Carbapenemase-Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPE)

What is CPE?

- CPE stands for **C**arbapenemase-**P**roducing **E**nterobacteriaceae
- Enterobacteriaceae are a family of bacteria (germ). It is normal for many of these bacteria to live in our bowels (gut).
- **C**arbapenemase-**P**roducing **E**nterobacteriaceae produce enzymes that can break down many types of antibiotic medications. This makes the bacteria resistant to commonly used antibiotics. If you have an infection with CPE, it will need to be treated with powerful antibiotics.
- CPE can live in your bowel without causing an infection. If you have it, but are not sick from it, no treatment is needed. This is called the carrier state and you can carry it for a long time.

How is it spread?

- CPE is not spread through the air, but may survive on equipment such as bedrails, tables, chairs, countertops and door handles.
- CPE can be spread from one person to another by unwashed hands or contact with soiled equipment and surfaces as mentioned above.
- Illness can occur when CPE gets into the body and cause an infection such as a bladder infection or lung infection.

Who is at risk to get it?

A key risk factor for getting a CPE is receiving health care in hospitals that have CPEs. This includes hospitals along the U.S. eastern seaboard, (particularly New York City), Greece, Israel, Columbia and the Indian subcontinent. CPE outbreaks have been seen in hospitals around the world, including Canada. People who travel to and from the Indian subcontinent, with or without exposure to health care, are also at risk.

What if I have a CPE infection?

- You will stay in a single room.
- A sign will be placed on your door to remind others who enter your room to wash hands, wear gloves and a gown. This is called “Contact Precautions” (isolation).
- Patients who have had contact with you will be tested for CPE.
- Your hospital record will show that you have a CPE.

Can I have visitors?

- Yes. Healthy family and visitors should have a low risk of getting an infection with CPE. All visitors must be instructed by staff on what to do before entering and leaving your room. Children and infants must be closely watched. We ask that your visitors only visit you in your room, and to do the following:
 - ✓ clean their hands before entering and leaving your room
 - ✓ follow the sign on the door and instructions given by staff
 - ✓ not to use your bathroom
 - ✓ not to eat or drink in your room

Clean hands are important!

- Remind all staff and visitors to clean their hands before and after they touch you. You can ask staff to show you how best to clean your hands. Scrub with soap and running water for 15 seconds or rub your hands with hand sanitizer until hands are dry.
- You need to clean your hands:
 - ✓ after using the bathroom
 - ✓ after blowing your nose
 - ✓ before eating and drinking
 - ✓ before and after you touch your dressing or wounds
 - ✓ when you can see dirt on your hands
 - ✓ before you leave your room



Home

- When you go home, wash your hands often, especially after using the bathroom and before preparing food. Wash for 15 seconds each time.
- No special cleaning of items such as dishes are needed.
- You can wash your clothes as you usually do. No need to keep separate from other household members unless they are really dirty and need to be soaked.

What should I do if I need health care again?

- When health care is needed again, please let the health care worker know that you have had a CPE. You may still be a carrier even though you feel well and it is causing you no harm. You need to give this information:
 - when you go to the dentist
 - when you go to a hospital or clinic
 - anytime you need to give a medical history
- Although healthy people are not a high risk of picking up your CPE, sick people might not be able to fight it off. The greatest risk of spreading your CPE is in the hospital. If you have to go to the hospital again, you will be checked for a CPE and may need Contact Precautions (isolation).
- Knowing you have a CPE will also help your doctor choose the correct antibiotic treatment.

For more information visit:

- CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/hai/organisms/cre/cre-patients.html>

Adherence to Infection Prevention and Control measures by staff and visitors is required to prevent further spread of the infection.

**Stop the spread of germs and infection.
Clean your hands.**



This fact sheet provides basic general information only and is to be used as a quick guide, not as a complete resource on the subject. If you have any further questions, ask Infection Prevention & Control or your health care provider.