

# ESBL

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## What is it?

- ESBL stands for **E**xtended **S**pectrum **B**eta-**L**actamase.
- ESBL is produced by some bacteria (germ) that may cause infections.
- Infections can occur in wounds, blood or the urinary tract
- Bacteria that produce ESBL can be found on the skin or in the rectal area without causing infection. This is called the carrier state.
- Bacteria that produce ESBL are not harmful to healthy people. Some of the reasons that put a person at risk of getting ESBL include:
  - poor nutrition
  - being elderly
  - poor hygiene
  - frequent use of antibiotics
  - frequent admissions to the hospital
  - having open wounds
  - use of a urinary catheter

## How is it spread?

- It is spread by touching people who have it or by handling things that they have used.
- It is not generally spread through the air by coughing or sneezing.

## Is there treatment for it?

- If you have an infection there are some antibiotics that can be used.
- If you have it, but are not sick from it (carrier state) it may go away on its own. No treatment is needed

## What can be done to prevent the spread of it?

- Cleaning your hands with hand sanitizer or soap and water is the best way to stop the spread of ESBL.
- If you are in the hospital, you may need Contact Precautions (isolation) and follow-up checks will be done.
- Always remember to tell your doctor, nurses, dentist, paramedics or other care providers that you may have an ESBL.

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