

Carbapenemase Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPE)

What is CPE?

Enterobacteriaceae are a family of bacteria, many of which live naturally in our bowels. Carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPE) produce carbapenemase enzymes that can break down many types of antibiotics, making the bacteria very resistant.

How is CPE spread?

Most people who carry CPE have no symptoms of infection and are colonized. The main site of colonization of CPE is the bowel. CPE is not spread through the air, but may survive on equipment and surfaces, such as bedrails, tables, chairs, countertops and door handles. CPE can be spread from one person to another by unwashed hands and from contact with soiled equipment and surfaces. Infection occurs when CPE enters the body at specific sites and causes symptoms of infection. For example, CPE can cause pneumonia and urinary tract infections. Since CPE is resistant to many types of antibiotics, treatment is difficult and may involve antibiotics which have significant side effects.

How is CPE prevented?

Proper hand hygiene is one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of getting colonized or infected with CPE.

How is CPE managed in the hospital?

Your healthcare team will continue to provide the same level of patient care. If a patient/resident is identified with CPE, roommates and patients in close proximity will be screened for CPE. Contact Precautions will be used to prevent the possible spread of the bacteria. For example:

- You may need to be moved to a single room
- A sign may be placed on your door to remind others who enter your room about the additional precautions (i.e. instructions to wash hands, wear gown and gloves)
- Speak to your doctor or nurse about instructions when leaving your room
- Everyone who leaves your room must clean their hands well, including you

Remember!

Good hand hygiene is the most important infection control practice to prevent and control the spread of microorganisms (bacteria, viruses).

Remind all staff and visitors to clean their hands before and after they touch you.

What do I need to do at home?

- It is important to wash hands often at home for fifteen seconds each time, especially after using the bathroom and before preparing food.
- No special cleaning of items in your home (e.g., dishes) are required.
- Clothing may be laundered in the usual manner, along with the rest of the household laundry.
- If you go to another health care facility, visit another doctor or have Home Care services you should tell them that you have CPE. They may use Contact Precautions when providing care, which will help prevent spread to others and helps your doctor choose the correct antibiotic treatment.

Reference:

<https://www.york.ca/media/121891/download?attachment?attachment>

http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/PIDAC-IPC_Annex_A_Screening_Testing_Surveillance_AROs_2013.pdf