



**University
Hospitals Sussex**
NHS Foundation Trust

Information if you have been in contact with someone who has Carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPE)

Infection Prevention

Patient information

What is this information about?

This information is about a bacteria called CPE. It tells you what it is, how it spreads, and what will happen if we think you may have been in contact with someone who is carrying it.

Why have I been given this information?

You have been given this information because you may have been in contact with someone who has been found to be carrying CPE. It is important that we control the spread of CPE because although it is not dangerous, it can cause infections that are resistant to antibiotics.

Reading this information will help you to understand what we can do to stop CPE spreading. Please share this information with people who might visit you in hospital too, so that they know what to expect.

What is CPE?

CPE is short for Carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae (pronounced en-ter-oh-bak-teer-ee-ay-see-eye).

Enterobacteriaceae are bacteria that usually live harmlessly in the gut. This is called colonisation. Someone who is colonised is called a carrier.

However, if the bacteria get into the wrong place, such as the bladder or bloodstream, they can cause infection.

How is CPE spread in hospital?

CPE can spread from person to person, especially in hospitals through contact with contaminated hands or surfaces. It is not usually a risk to healthy people.

What does it mean to be a CPE contact?

Being a contact means that:

- you may have been cared for in the same ward or area as someone with CPE
- you may have shared the same environment or equipment.

This does not mean that you are infected or unwell.

Do people who are carriers of CPE need any treatment?

If a person is a carrier of CPE, they do not need any treatment. But if the bacteria have caused an infection, it is likely they will need antibiotics.

Do I need to be screened (tested)?

You will be screened for CPE as a precaution. There is a slight chance that you could have picked up the bacteria and are carrying it too.

As it is not immediately known that someone is carrying these bacteria, they will be placed straight into a single room.

What does screening involve?

Screening usually involves taking a rectal swab, a sample taken by inserting a swab just inside your rectum (bottom).

You may be asked to have additional tests to help guide your ongoing care and treatment such as a wound swab or urine sample.

You will be informed of the results as soon as they are available.

What happens if the result is negative?

If the result is negative, the doctors or nurses will check that a further two samples are negative before you can go back to stay on the main ward. If all three results are negative, you do not need any more tests, and you will be able to return to the main ward.

This will not affect your care in any way.

What happens if the result is positive?

If the result is positive, please ask your doctor or nurse to explain this to you in more detail. We will continue to care for you in a single room while you are still in hospital.

If you have an infection, you will need to have antibiotics. However, if there are no signs of infection and you are simply carrying the bacteria, you will not need any treatment.

Where can I find more information?

If you would like further information, please speak to a member of your healthcare team, who may also contact the infection prevention and control team for you.

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This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care in St Richard's, Worthing and Southlands.

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