

- toilets (chairs for visitors are available on every ward)
- not sharing items with other patients unless they have been cleaned
- letting the ward staff know if you have had CPE in the past

### **What precautions are needed at home?**

Having CPE will not stop you from going home if you are well. It is important to tell your GP or healthcare provider of your CPE result.

We will also inform your GP of your CPE result.

If a relative or friend is caring for you at home, it is important that they wash their hands with soap and water before and after they give care to you. Bed linen, clothes and other laundry items can be washed as normal.

If you have any questions or concerns, please ask your nurse for advice or ask to speak to a member of the Infection Prevention Team.

### **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

PALS offers confidential information, support and advice on health related matters. Contact can be made either by telephone, email or in person and PALS staff can visit patients on wards.

The contact details are:

Lincoln County Hospital: (01522) 707071

Grantham and District Hospital: (01476) 464861

Pilgrim Hospital, Boston: (01205) 446243

Email: [pals@ulh.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@ulh.nhs.uk)

The Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is accurate and impartial.

If you require this information in another language, large print, audio (CD or tape) or braille, please email the Patient Information team at [patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk)

# Carbapenemase Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPE)

Infection Prevention Team

[www.ulh.nhs.uk](http://www.ulh.nhs.uk)

## **What is CPE?**

Carbapenemase-producing enterobacteriaceae (CPE) are a strain of the bacteria Enterobacteriaceae, which naturally live in the gut of humans and animals and help to digest food. This is called colonisation, causes no harm and requires no treatment. However, if these bacteria get into other places, such as the bladder or bloodstream, they can cause infection.

CPE are very resistant to Carbapenems, which are a group of very powerful antibiotics that, until recently, doctors relied upon to fight infections where treatment with other antibiotics has failed. This makes it very difficult to treat and that is why it is important that CPE is not allowed to spread.

## **Who is at risk from CPE?**

Those people who have been in hospital abroad or in a hospital in the UK where CPE infections have been found (currently London or the North West of England, including Manchester) or who have been in contact with someone who has had CPE, are most at risk of carrying CPE.

## **How do we test for CPE?**

If you are at risk of having CPE, you will be offered a screening test. This will involve having 3 swabs taken from your bottom (rectum), with a 2 day gap between each time the swab is taken. Stool (poo) samples can also be tested. If necessary, other samples (for example, a urine (wee) sample or a swab from a wound) may be needed.

## **How can we stop the spread of the bacteria?**

If you carry CPE you will be nursed in a single room for your entire stay in hospital. Staff will wear protective clothing (gloves and aprons), when helping you to wash, toilet and dress. This prevents the spread of the bacteria to other people.

It is important for you to wash your hands well with soap and water especially after using the toilet or commode and before eating. On all other occasions, if your hands look clean, you can

also use alcohol hand rub to freshen your hands.

It is also important that you avoid touching any medical devices such as urinary catheters or intravenous drips, especially at the point where they enter the body. This will help reduce the risk of developing an infection with CPE.

## **What is the treatment?**

Often patients do not require treatment as they do not have any symptoms. However, if your symptoms suggest you have a CPE infection, your doctor may decide to give you treatment.

## **How can my family and friends protect themselves when visiting?**

Visitors must wash their hands every time they:

- Leave the single room
- Before preparing food
- Before eating
- After using the toilet

They should not visit if they are feeling unwell or have recently had diarrhoea.

It is best if young children and babies avoid visiting.

Visitors should observe any restrictions in place as these help us to make sure the ward is cleaned thoroughly throughout the day.

## **What you can do**

You can help to avoid the transmission of CPE by:

- washing your hands after using the toilet or commode and before you eat
- keeping your bed space tidy and uncluttered to make cleaning easier for ward staff
- asking staff and visitors to wash their hands before and after seeing you
- asking visitors not to sit on your bed or to use patients'