

Advice for Those in Contact with CPE

Information for patients and service users

What does 'carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae' mean?

Enterobacteriaceae are bacteria that usually live harmlessly in the gut of humans. This is called 'colonisation' (a person is said to be a 'carrier'). However, if the bacteria get into the wrong place, such as the bladder or bloodstream they can cause infection. Carbapenems are one of the most powerful types of antibiotics. Carbapenemases are enzymes (chemicals), made by some strains of these bacteria, which allow them to destroy carbapenem antibiotics and so the bacteria are said to be resistant to the antibiotics.

Why does carbapenem resistance matter?

Carbapenem antibiotics can only be given in hospital directly into the bloodstream. Until now, doctors have relied on them to successfully treat certain 'difficult' infections when other antibiotics have failed to do so. Therefore, in a hospital, where there are many vulnerable patients, spread of resistant bacteria can cause problems.

Does carriage of carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae need to be treated?

If a person is a carrier of carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae (sometimes called CPE), they do not need to be treated. As mentioned, these bacteria can live harmlessly in the gut. However, if the bacteria have caused an infection then antibiotics will be required.

How is carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae spread?

If a patient in hospital is carrying these bacteria it can get into the ward environment and can also be passed on by direct contact with that particular patient. For that reason, the patient will normally be accommodated in a single room. Effective environmental cleaning and good hand hygiene by all, staff and patients, can reduce the risk of spread significantly.

Do I need to be screened?

Occasionally, it isn't immediately known that a patient is carrying these bacteria and so they may not be placed into a single room straight away. Screening will be offered if you have shared the same bay (or ward) with a patient who has been found to be carrying carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae. This screening is offered as there is a slight chance that you could have picked up the bacteria and are carrying it too.

How will I be screened for carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae?

Screening usually entails taking three rectal swabs by inserting it just inside your rectum (bottom). These need to be taken at 48 hour intervals. Alternatively, you may be asked to provide a sample of faeces. The swab / sample will be sent to the laboratory and you will normally be informed of the result within two to three days. If the result is negative nothing further is required.

What if the result is positive?

If the result is positive do ask your doctor or nurse to explain this to you in more detail and to provide a leaflet relating to positive results. You will be given a single room until you leave hospital. No treatment is necessary unless you have an infection when antibiotics will be given.

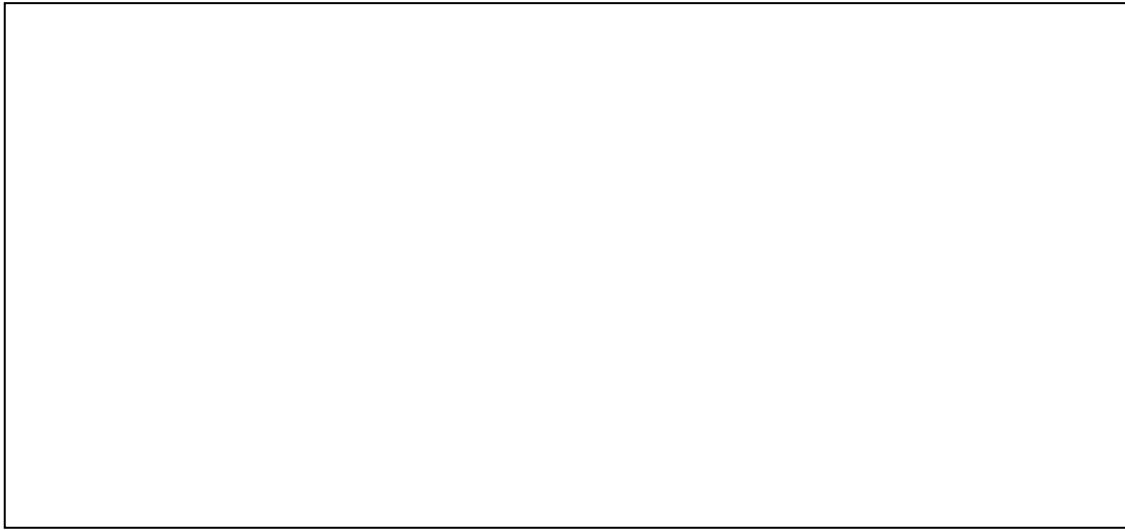
Where can I find more information?

www.hpa.org.uk/Topics/InfectiousDiseases/InfectionsAZ/CarbapenemResistance/

To Staff Members

Please complete and sign below.

Insert patient sticker in box below



Staff name

Staff signature

Date

Help us prevent the spread of infection in hospital.

Please make sure your hands are clean. Wash and dry them thoroughly and/or use the gel provided.

**If you have been unwell in the last 48 hours
please consider whether your visit is essential.**

If you need this leaflet in a language other than English, or would like to receive this information in large print, Braille or audio, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01934 647216.



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