

Your doctor or nurse may give you a letter or card advising that you have had an infection or been colonised with carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae. This will be useful in the future and it is important that you make healthcare staff aware either when you are admitted to hospital or if you believe you have an infection.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

If you have any concerns or queries you may wish to speak to your healthcare worker or contact your GP for advice. Alternatively, if you would like any further information the Public Health England website can be accessed.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/carbapenem-resistance-guidance-data-and-analysis>

This leaflet gives general advice. For further information please ask either the nursing or medical staff who are providing your care and treatment or contact the Infection Prevention and Control Team on 01386 502552.

If you would like this leaflet in a different language, larger print size, in audio, Braille or any other format please contact the

PALS team by phone on

☎ 01905 760020;

by letter ✉ Communications,
Worcestershire Health and Care Trust,
2 Kings Court, Charles Hasting Way,
Worcester. WR5 1JR.

or by email 📧:

WHCNHS.communications@nhs.net



**Worcestershire
Health and Care**
NHS Trust



CARBAPENEMASE - PRODUCING ENTEROBACTERIACEAE

*Advice for those identified with or
contacts of carbapenemase-
producing Enterobacteriaceae*

Your questions answered

**An Information Leaflet for
Patients and Staff**

WHAT ARE 'CARBAPENEMASE-PRODUCING ENTEROBACTERIACEAE'?

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.

Carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae (sometimes abbreviated CPE) are Enterobacteriaceae which have become resistant to carbapenems, a group of powerful antibiotics. This can make infections harder to treat as they will not respond to carbapenem or most other penicillin like antibiotics.

WHY DOES THIS 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 or other care setting where there are many vulnerable patients, spread of resistant bacteria can cause problems.

DOES CARRIAGE OF THIS NEED TREATING?

If a person is a carrier of carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae, 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. Please do ask your doctor or healthcare worker to explain your situation to you in more detail.

HOW ARE CARBAPENEMASE-PRODUCING ENTEROBACTERIACEAE SPREAD?

In a hospital or health care setting when a patient is carrying this bacterium, the environment can become contaminated which can then spread to others through direct or indirect contact. Staff work hard to ensure that the environment is kept clean and you will see staff cleaning their hands. If you have any concerns please speak to the staff or your carer.

WHAT ABOUT MY FAMILY AND VISITORS?

There is no need for you to advise visitors that you are a carrier or have an infection as long as hygiene measures are in place. If you have an infection, it is important to work with healthcare staff to ensure that any wounds are covered with a dressing to prevent contamination of clothes or furnishings. Carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae are not a risk to healthy people. The most important advice to you and your family is to maintain good personal hygiene.

DO CLOSE FAMILY HAVE TO BE SCREENED?

If admitted to hospital, they should tell a member of healthcare staff on admission that a member of their household is or has been a carrier of carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae. They may be screened as part of their admission process.

HOW CAN SPREAD BE PREVENTED?

The most important measure you can take is to maintain good hand hygiene, washing your hands with soap and water, especially after going to the toilet. You should avoid touching any medical devices (such as urinary catheters) if you have any, particularly at the point where it is inserted into the body or skin.

If you are receiving care in your own home you should not restrict your lifestyle in any way however, a few sensible measures will prevent spread to others. As well as effective hand hygiene, keeping toilet and bathroom areas clean and using separate towels are the best way to prevent spread. Clothes and laundry should be washed normally at the hottest temperature advised on the label.

You should expect that visiting healthcare workers will clean their hands on arrival, before and after providing you with care. They should wear an apron and gloves when caring for you.

WHAT DOES BEING A CONTACT OF A CARRIER MEAN?

This means that you have been in the same ward or care environment as a person who is a carrier of carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae or that you live in a household with someone who is a known carrier. As a contact of a carrier, if you are admitted to hospital you may be offered screening for 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.