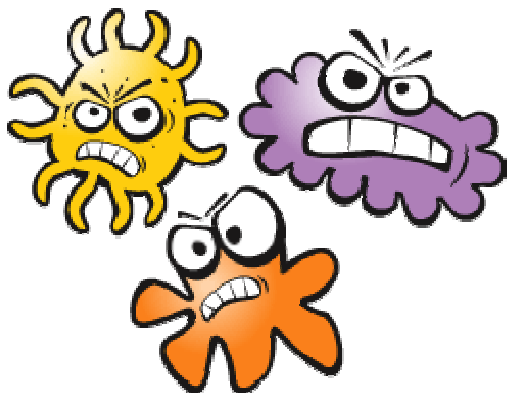


WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT HOME?

- 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 CRE.

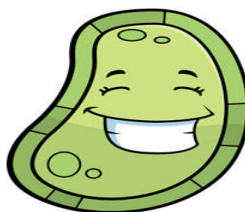


This fact sheet provides basic general information only and is to be used as a quick guide, not as a complete resource on the subject. If you have any further questions, ask your nurse, Infection Prevention & Control Practitioner or your physician.

If you are not a patient in the hospital but would like more information regarding CRE, contact your physician or the Eastern Ontario Health Unit.



REFERENCE: Routine Practices and Additional Precautions in all Health Care Settings, July 2011.



Carbapenem Resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE)



WHAT ARE CRE?

Enterobacteriaceae are a family of bacteria, many of which live naturally in our bowels. Carbapenem-resistant *Enterobacteriaceae* (CRE) produce Carbapenem enzymes that can break down many types of antibiotics, making the bacteria very resistant. In Canadian Hospitals, there are currently few infections with CRE, but caution is still needed to prevent their increase and spread.

HOW ARE CRE SPREAD?

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

DOES CRE GO AWAY?

People who have CRE in their bowel will likely carry it for a long time. You may be treated if CRE is causing symptoms of infection.



WHO IS AT RISK FOR CRE?

Currently, the major risk factor is receiving health care in settings that have CRE, e.g., hospitals along the U.S. eastern seaboard (particularly New York City), Greece, Israel and the Indian subcontinent, with or without exposure to health care, are also at risk.

PREVENTION OF TRANSMISSION IN THE HOSPITAL

WHAT SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS ARE REQUIRED?

Your healthcare team will continue to provide the same level of patient care. If a patient is identified with CRE, roommates and patients in close proximity will be screened for CRE.

Additional Precautions will be used to prevent the possible spread of bacteria. For example:

- You will need a room of your own or share a room with another patient who also has CRE.
- A sign will be placed on your door to remind others who enter your room about the special precautions (i.e. instructions to wash hands, wear gown and gloves)
- Speak to your doctor or nurse about special instructions if you must leave your room for a procedure or essential test.
- Everyone who leaves your room must clean their hands well, including you
- Your hospital record will indicate CRE

WHAT ABOUT FAMILY AND VISITORS?

Family and visitors can visit you. Healthy family and visitors have a low risk of acquiring infection with CRE. All visitors must be instructed by the staff on how to use Additional Precautions.

Children and infants should be closely supervised. We ask that your visitors only visit you and your room, and to do the following:

- Clean their hands before entering your room and when leaving
- Not to use your bathroom
- Not to eat or drink in your room

GOOD HAND HYGIENE

Remind all staff and visitors to practice good hand hygiene before and after they touch you or your environment. Ask your nurse or doctor to demonstrate proper hand hygiene techniques (15 seconds of soap and running water OR alcohol-based hand rub until hands are dry).

You need to clean your hands:

- After using the bathroom
- After blowing your nose
- Before eating and drinking
- Before and after you touch your dressing or wounds
- When your hands are visibly dirty (soiled)
- Before you leave your room

