

Where can i get further information?

You can talk to your doctor or the nursing staff. If you wish to speak with the Infection Control Department ask your nurse to contact us.

References

Australian Govt. Dept. of Health and Aging, Infection Control Guidelines, 2013

Queensland Health Resource No: FS113. Developed by the Infection Management and Prevention Service. Updated: August 2016

Government of South Australia, Fact sheet for Health Care Professionals Extended – spectrum beta lactamase (ESBL) producing bacteria, February 2016.



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ESBL/pAmpC

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What is ESBL/pAmpC (Extended Spectrum Beta Lactamase)?

ESBL/ pAmpC's are enzymes that may be produced by some bacteria usually found in the bowel and urinary tract, such as E.coli. The bacteria can also infect or colonize other sites of the body e.g. lungs and sputum. ESBL/ pAmpC's are considered multi-resistant organisms (MRO) due to the large number of antibiotics the bacteria are resistant to. It is therefore important to control the spread of ESBL/pAmpC's to ensure that the bacteria will still respond to commonly used antibiotics.

Where is it?

The bacteria are usually 'COLONISED' in patients and are often found in the bowel without causing any signs of infection. However, if ESBL/ pAmpC's have the opportunity to be transferred to wounds or urine they can cause local infection, or even a systemic infection of the blood such as septicemia.

What is colonisation?

Many bacteria can live on or in the body without causing disease or illness. This is called 'Colonisation'. People can be colonized for very long periods of time, sometimes years, which is why when patient's return to hospital, special infection control contact precautions are taken. Colonisation with ESBL/ pAmpC does not usually require treatment.

What is infection?

When bacteria cause disease or illness this is called infection. When ESBL/pAmpC causes an infection, your doctor will consider commencing treatment; if appropriate.

Who is at risk from ESBL/pAmpC infections?

ESBL/ pAmpC infections can occur in people who are

- Elderly – especially from nursing homes.
- Have a low immunity
- Have indwelling devices such as urinary catheters, intravenous lines (drips), and feeding tubes
- Have received frequent and / or long term antibiotics.
- Suffer from chronic urinary tract infections / cystitis

How can ESBL/pAmpC be spread?

ESBL/pAmpC is spread through contact with the bacteria. This may be from direct contact with a colonized or infected person or by indirect contact with a contaminated surface such as bed linen, shared towels or toilets. To prevent the spread of ESBL/pAmpC to other sick patients in the hospital the nursing staff will care for you using infection control contact precautions and strict hand hygiene.

How will my care change whilst in hospital?

- You will be managed using infection control contact precautions until you are discharged.
- A sign is placed outside your door to alert hospital staff for the need to use protective infection control contact precautions. This sign also alerts visitors of the need to speak with nursing staff prior to entering your room.
- The hospital staff will wear protective clothing such as gloves and an apron or gown when they enter your room. These items are disposed of in a separate waste bin as the staff member leaves your room.

Good Hand hygiene practices

Hand Hygiene is the most effective way to prevent ALL infections, including the flu and the common cold. Encourage your family and friends to maintain good hand hygiene practices every day.

Hand Washing Alternative - Alcohol based hand rub / gel.

During your stay in hospital you may have seen the staff using an alcohol-based hand rub, as an alternative to soap and water. Alcohol-based hand rubs or gels can be used for hand hygiene as long as your hands are not visibly soiled / dirty.

Can i still have visitors?

Yes – you can still have visitors. In general, exposure to ESBL/pAmpC does not cause infection in healthy people; this includes pregnant women, babies and children. Contact such as hugging and kissing is OK.

Encourage your visitors to perform hand hygiene before and after they enter your room. They can use both soap and water at the wall sink in your room, or the alcohol hand rub provided inside your room.

What happens when i go home?

- When you return home it is important for you, your family and your friends to continue the good hand hygiene practices that you have been taught in hospital.
- There are no special precautions required for the washing of clothes, linen, crockery and cutlery or for the cleaning of the bath, toilet and shower.
- This is important that you always tell your doctor, nurse, paramedic, or other health care provider that you have previously had ESBL/ pAmpC. This will help to prevent the future spread of ESBL/ pAmpC.