



## Patient & Family Information

### Carbapenemase-Producing Enterobacteriaceae – (CPE)

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#### What is Carbapenemase-Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPE)?

CPE are a family of bacteria that usually live in the human gut without causing any problems or symptoms. This is known as being a 'carrier' (sometimes called colonization) and does not require any treatment. Occasionally, CPE can get into other parts of the body such as the bladder or bloodstream and cause serious infections, which can be life-threatening.

CPE are members of the enterobacteriaceae family that are resistant to a group of antibiotics (called carbapenems) that are usually prescribed to treat infections caused by these bacteria. This means these infections cannot be treated by certain antibiotics. In Canadian hospitals, there are few infections with CPE, but caution is still needed to prevent the spread of resistant bacteria.

#### How is CPE spread?

CPE can spread from person to person by unwashed hands or via shared medical equipment and surfaces (such as bedrails, tables, chairs, countertops and door handles) that are not properly cleaned and disinfected.

#### What special precautions are required for CPE?

Your healthcare team will continue to provide the same level of patient care. If you have tested positive for CPE, other patients in close proximity will be screened for CPE.

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

- You will stay in a room by yourself.
- A sign will be placed on your door to remind everyone who enters your room about the special precautions that must be taken such as handwashing and wearing gloves and a gown.
- You should speak to your doctor or nurse about special instructions when leaving your room.
- You will clean your hands when you leave your room.
- Everyone who leaves your room will clean their hands.
- Your hospital record will indicate that you have CPE.

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## What about family and visitors?

Family and visitors can still visit you in hospital.

- The signs outside your room will show them how to safely wear gloves and a gown.
- They must clean their hands with hand sanitizer before entering and when leaving your room.
- Before leaving your room, they must remove the gloves and gown and dispose of them in the garbage container located in your room.
- Family and visitors in isolation rooms should not enter the kitchenette area or other supply areas. Ask a nurse for assistance.
- Any items in the patient room are dedicated to the patient and should not leave the room.
- Visitors should not eat or drink in your room or your bathroom.



## Practice Good Hand Hygiene!

We invite you to ask anyone who enters your room to clean their hands before and after they touch you. Special attention should be paid to handwashing (15 seconds of soap and running water or using two pumps of alcohol-based hand sanitizer and rubbing until hands are dry) as this is the most important practice to prevent the spread of bacteria. You should wash your hands:

- After using the bathroom
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- Before eating and drinking
- Before and after you touch your bandages /dressings or wounds
- When your hands are visibly dirty
- Before you leave your hospital room

At home and in the hospital, the most important practice to prevent the spread of all bacteria is good handwashing! Ask your nurse to demonstrate proper hand hygiene techniques if you are unsure.

## 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 the home is required.
- Clothing may be laundered in the same manner as the rest of the household laundry.
- Always tell your physician, paramedics, nurses or other care providers that you have CPE. This helps prevent spread to others.

*Reference: Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee (PIDAC) Routine Practices & Additional Precautions in All Healthcare Settings February 2013*



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