

## Infection Prevention and Control

# CPE contact information leaflet

### What is CPE?

A healthy human gut contains bacteria called Enterobacterales. While they are in the gut, they cause no harm and help us digest our food. This is called colonisation. However, if this bacteria gets into the wrong place, such as the bladder or bloodstream, they can cause infection in the body.

Carbapenemase-Producing Enterobacterales known as CPE are a strain of these Enterobacterales. The bacteria have developed a resistance to a powerful group of antibiotics called carbapenems. Carbapenems are an important group of antibiotics that doctors often rely on to fight infections where treatment with other antibiotics has failed.

### How CPE is spread?

It's important that we stop the spread of CPE in our hospitals. CPE is spread through touch. Either from direct contact with a person who is colonised with CPE or indirectly from the person's immediate environment including through care equipment.

It is important the care environment, such as toilets, furniture's are kept clean, and hands are cleaned before and after touching people and surfaces.

### What does being a CPE contact mean?

This means you have been in the same ward or care environment as a person who is a carrier of CPE. Being a CPE contact **does not** mean you carry CPE or have a CPE infection. It means there's a risk that CPE may



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have spread to you.

### **What can you do to stop the spread?**

You can reduce the risk of spreading CPE by:

- Cleaning your hands regularly
- Wash with soap or use alcohol hand rub
- Keep your toilet clean
- Wash clothes, bed linen and dishes as usual

Being a CPE contact should not get in the way of your day-to-day life. You do not need to limit time spent or contact with anyone.

### **Does a CPE positive patient need to be treated?**

No, not normally. People who have CPE in their body do not need to be treated as these bacteria live harmlessly in the gut, without causing problems. However, if you have an infection caused by CPE, you will need antibiotics to treat it.

### **Do you need screening?**

As a CPE contact, if you are admitted to UHCW NHS trust, you may be offered screening for CPE. This screening is offered as there is a slight chance that you could have picked up the bacteria and are carrying it too.

### **What does screening involve?**

In hospital CPE contacts are placed on an 8-week screening programme following last date of contact. Screening usually involves a rectal swab (a sample taken by inserting a swab briefly just inside your bottom).

Alternatively, we may ask you to provide a stool (poo) sample. The swab or sample will be sent to the laboratory, you should get the result of each CPE screening test back within a few days.

### **What happens if the result is negative?**

If CPE is not found on any of the samples within the 8-week screening period, you are no longer a CPE contact.

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### What happens if the result is positive?

If the result is positive, please ask your doctor or nurse to explain this to you and provide you with a CPE positive information leaflet. You will be cared for in a single room during your stay in hospital during all hospital stays.

### More information

If you would like any further information, please speak to a member of your healthcare team.

### Useful links

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/carbapenem-resistance-guidance-data-and-analysis](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/carbapenem-resistance-guidance-data-and-analysis)

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