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| Screening for carbapenemase-producing *Enterobacteriaceae* (CPE) |
| Information for patients |

## What is CPE?

***Enterobacteriaceae*** is the name given to a family of bacteria that normally lives in our bowel. A well-known *Enterobacteriaceae* you may have heard of is *Escherichia coli* or *E. coli*.

**Carbapenems** are a group of antibiotics (for example, meropenem) that usually work against these bacteria. Some bacteria have become hard to treat because these antibiotics no longer work – the bacteria have become resistant to the antibiotics. These bacteria are called **Carbapenemase-producing *Enterobacteriaceae*** (CPE).

## Why am I being screened?

You are being screened because you are considered at risk of having been exposed to CPE. This could be because you have received health care overseas or from a Victorian hospital with a CPE outbreak. Alternatively, you may have been identified as someone who has had contact (e.g. shared a room in a hospital) with somebody who has CPE.

## How is the screening done?

The preferred method for screening for CPE is to test a sample of your faeces, although sometimes a rectal swab may be tested instead. If you have any wounds that have not yet healed or any indwelling medical devices (e.g. urinary catheter), samples may also be collected from these sites as well. With your consent, your nurse or doctor will take the samples.

## Waiting for the result

Usually, while awaiting the result of the screening test you will be placed into a single room. Staff should wear gowns and gloves whenever they enter your room in order to protect other patients. The test may take up to a week to process and your doctor will notify you of the result.

Your family and visitors do not need to take any special precautions, other than performing hand hygiene whenever they enter and leave your room. This is because healthy people are at a lower risk from CPE.

## What happens if the result is positive?

Your doctor will provide more specific information regarding any treatment you may require. For all of your hospital admissions you will be cared for in a single room and staff will wear gowns and gloves. It will be important to let any other healthcare providers (for example your GP) know that you have CPE.

## Where can I get more information?

If you would like more information about screening for CPE, you can contact the infection control unit at the hospital. A CPE information sheet for patients can be found on the [Department of Health and Human Services website](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/infection-control) <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/infection-control>.

Adapted from: Alfred Health (2016) *Screening for multi-resistant organisms*

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