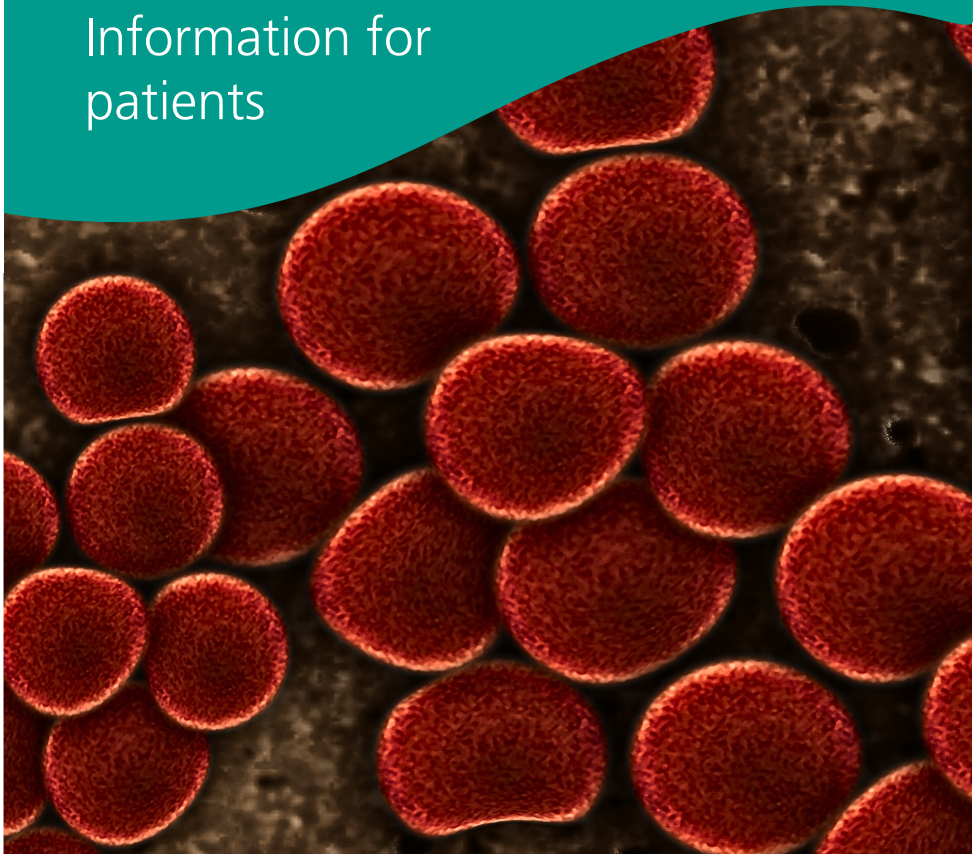


Carbapenemase Producing Enterobacteriaceae

Information for
patients



I have been assessed as at risk of carrying carbapenemase-producing Enterobacterales, what does this mean?

What does 'carbapenemase-producing Enterobacterales (CPE)' mean?

Carbapenemase-producing Enterobacterales (sometimes called CPEs), are antibiotic-resistant bacteria carried by a small number of people. These bacteria usually live harmlessly in the human gut without making people unwell. This is called 'colonisation' (a person is said to be a 'carrier'). However, some infections are caused by bacteria we are already carrying and if CPE gets into the wrong place such as the bladder or bloodstream, they can cause infection. Carbapenems are one of the most powerful types of antibiotics. Carbapenemases are enzymes (chemicals), made by some strains of these bacteria, which allow them to destroy carbapenem antibiotics (and others including penicillins). This means the bacteria are resistant to these antibiotics.

Why does carbapenem resistance matter?

Doctors rely on carbapenem antibiotics to successfully treat certain complicated infections when other antibiotics have failed. The spread of these resistant bacteria can cause problems to vulnerable patients in hospitals or other settings because there are so few antibiotics available to treat the infections they cause.

Does carriage of carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae need to be treated?

If a person is a carrier of CPE they do not need to be treated. As these bacteria can live harmlessly in the gut, and exposure to antibiotics can create additional resistance. However, if the bacteria are causing an infection, antibiotics will be required.

How will I know if I am at risk of being a carrier or having an infection?

Your doctor or nurse may suspect that you are a carrier if you have been in a hospital abroad, or in a UK hospital that has had patients carrying these bacteria, or if you have been in contact with a CPE carrier elsewhere. If any of these reasons apply to you, screening will be arranged for you and you will be accommodated in a single room with your own toilet facilities whilst you are in hospital, until the results are known.

How will I be screened for Carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae?

Screening usually involves taking a rectal swab, this is performed by inserting a small swab just inside your rectum (bottom). Alternatively, you may be asked to provide a sample of faeces. The swab / sample will be sent to the laboratory and you will normally be informed of the result within two to three days. These measures will not hinder your care in any way.

What happens if the result is negative?

If your CPE screen results are negative no further actions are required. You may be asked about your risks of carrying CPE if you attend hospital again in the future, and further screening may be required. Please ask staff members if you have further questions about why this is important.

Contact details

If you, your family or friends have any problems or questions please ask any member of the nursing or medical staff.

Otherwise you may contact the Infection Prevention and Control team on 0113 206 6339.



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