

EXTENDED SPECTRUM BETA-LACTAMASE PRODUCING BACTERIA (ESBL) Information Sheet for Patients and Visitors

WHAT ARE ESBLs?

ESBL-producing bacteria are a group of bacteria that produce enzymes called 'beta-lactamases'. These enzymes break down commonly used antibiotics so that the antibiotics don't work and a different antibiotic may need to be used to treat the infection. Some people carry ESBL-producing bacteria but do not have an infection hence do not need to be treated.

HOW ARE ESBLs SPREAD?

Most people who carry ESBL have no symptoms of infection and are said to be colonized. The main site of colonization of ESBL is the bowel. ESBL is not spread through the air, but may survive on equipment and surfaces, such as bedrails, tables, chairs, countertops and door handles. ESBL can be spread from one person to another by unwashed hands or from contact with soiled equipment and surfaces. Infection occurs when ESBL enters the body at specific sites and causes symptoms of disease. For example, ESBL can often cause urinary tract infections.

WHAT SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS ARE REQUIRED FOR ESBLs?

Your healthcare team will continue to provide the same level of patient care. If a patient/resident is identified with ESBL, roommates and patients in close proximity will be screened for ESBL.

It is important that special precautions are taken to stop ESBL from spreading to other patients in the facility. These precautions include:

- Single room accommodation (the door can remain open) or shared room with patient with ESBL
- A long-sleeved gown and gloves will be worn by everyone who cares for you
- A sign will be placed on your door to remind others who enter your room about the special precautions
- The room and the equipment used in the room will be cleaned and disinfected regularly
- Everyone who leaves your room must clean their hands well with alcohol foam rub, including you
- Speak to your doctor or nurse about special precautions when leaving your room
- Your medical record will indicate ESBL

WHAT ABOUT FAMILY/VISITORS?

Your family and visitors may visit you. Visitors are allowed as long as they follow the directions on the sign and report to the nursing station before entering the room. When your family and friends visit, they should not assist other patients with their personal care as this may cause the bacteria to spread. They will be required to wear a long-sleeved gown and gloves while in your room.

- All visitors must be instructed by the staff on how to use Contact Precautions.
- Children and infants should be closely supervised.
- We ask that your visitors only visit you and your room, and to do the following: Visitors must not access the kitchen after they have been in your room. Your healthcare provider will help them if they need kitchen facility and they have already been in your room.

- Food items from home should be single portions. Once food containers enter your room, they cannot be placed in the fridge in the common kitchen on the unit
- Visitors can access the kitchen to place items in the fridge if they have not yet entered your room during their visit.
- Visitors must clean their hands before entering your room with alcohol foam rub
- Visitors must not use your bathroom
- Visitors should not to eat or drink in your room
- Before leaving your room, visitors must remove the gloves dispose of in the garbage container and remove gown and place in the linen hamper located in your room.
- Visitors must clean their hands upon leaving room with alcohol foam rub

GOOD HAND HYGIENE PRACTICES:

Remind all staff and visitors to practice good hand hygiene before and after they touch you. Ask your nurse or doctor to demonstrate proper hand hygiene techniques (15 seconds of soap and running water, turning off taps with paper towels used to dry hands OR alcohol-based hand rub until hands are dry).

You need to clean your hands:

- After using the bathroom
- After blowing your nose
- Before eating and drinking
- Before and after you touch your dressing or wounds
- When your hands are visibly dirty (soiled) use soap and water to wash hands
- Before you leave your room in hospital

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT HOME?

- Everyone who might help you with your personal care or with going to the toilet should wash their hands after contact with you as they normally do
- Wash your hands before you make any food and before you eat. This practice should be followed by everyone in the household.
- Wash your hands well after using the toilet as you normally would.
- Bathroom hand towels can be shared however should be exchanged for clean towels more often than your normal practice
- Clothing may be laundered in the usual manner, and along with, the rest of the household laundry.
- No special cleaning of furniture or items (e.g. dishes) in the home is required.
- If you share a bathroom at home, clean the toilet and sink at least weekly with a household cleanser as normally would
- Always tell your physician, paramedics, nurses or other care providers that you have ESBL. This helps prevent spread to others and helps your doctor choose the right antibiotics if necessary.