

Screening for carbapenemase-producing organisms (CPO)

Information for patients

OFFICIAL

What are carbapenemase-producing organisms (CPO)?

CPO are a group of bacteria (germs) that are resistant to many antibiotics, including a type of antibiotic called carbapenems. This means that these antibiotics no longer work against these bacteria, which can make infections difficult to treat.

These bacteria may be found in the bowel or sometimes on the skin or in the sputum.

Why am I being screened?

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

How is the screening done?

The preferred method for screening for CPO 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 (for example, 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.

What happens if the result is positive?

Your doctor will provide more specific information regarding any treatment you may require. For other hospital admissions you may still need to be cared for in a single room. It will be important to let any other healthcare providers (for example, your GP or other hospitals) know that you have CPO.

Where can I get more information?

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

To receive this publication in an accessible format phone Communicable Disease Prevention and Control on 1300 651 160, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or [email Communicable Disease Prevention and Control <infectious.diseases@health.vic.gov.au>](mailto:infectious.diseases@health.vic.gov.au).

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Available at the [Department of Health website <www.health.vic.gov.au/infection-control>](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/infection-control)