

Information for People Who Have Tested Positive for ESBL-Producing Bacteria or CPO

You have received this information because ESBL-producing bacteria or CPO have been detected in a sample taken during your healthcare visit. This leaflet explains what these bacteria are and what this may mean for you.

What are ESBL-producing bacteria and CPO?

ESBL (Extended-Spectrum Beta-Lactamases) are substances produced by certain bacteria that make them resistant to several types of antibiotics.

CPO (Carbapenemase-Producing Organisms) are bacteria that are resistant to more antibiotics than ESBL-producing bacteria.

In humans, ESBL-producing bacteria and CPO are most commonly found in the intestines. If you have these bacteria in your intestines without being ill or experiencing any symptoms, you are considered a **carrier** of ESBL-producing bacteria or CPO. You are also considered a carrier if the bacteria were first discovered when you had an infection.

Is it dangerous to be a carrier of ESBL-producing bacteria or CPO?

Most people who carry ESBL-producing bacteria or CPO do not develop an infection and do not become ill due to these bacteria.

However, if you develop an infection caused by ESBL-producing bacteria or CPO, it may be more difficult to treat than other infections caused by the same type of bacteria.

How do ESBL-producing bacteria and CPO spread?

ESBL-producing bacteria and CPO live in the intestines and are passed in stool (faeces).

The bacteria can contaminate the hands after using the toilet or after contact with stool. From there, they can spread to other people, either through direct contact or indirectly through contaminated objects and surfaces, such as door handles and other frequently touched surfaces.

What can I do to reduce the risk of spreading these bacteria to others?

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water:
 - before preparing or eating food
 - after using the toilet
 - after contact with your own bodily fluids, such as wounds, a urine drainage bag, or a urinary catheter
 - whenever your hands are visibly dirty
 - when visiting a hospital, nursing home, or other healthcare facility
- Wash underwear, towels, and bed linen at 90°C (194°F) if the fabrics can tolerate this temperature.
- When cleaning your home, make sure to clean door handles, cupboard handles, and other frequently touched surfaces.

Can I attend daycare, school, or work if I am a carrier of ESBL-producing bacteria or CPO?

Children who carry ESBL-producing bacteria or CPO can attend daycare or school and take part in leisure activities and play as usual.

Adults can continue to work as normal even if they are carriers of ESBL-producing bacteria or CPO.

Remember to follow the advice above to reduce the risk of spreading the bacteria to others.

Who do I need to tell that I am a carrier of ESBL-producing bacteria or CPO?

You should inform healthcare providers that you are a carrier of ESBL-producing bacteria or CPO whenever you receive healthcare, for example when visiting a doctor or when being admitted to a hospital or nursing home.

Information about your carrier status will also be recorded in your medical record. This helps healthcare professionals prevent the spread of infection and choose the most appropriate antibiotics if you develop an infection.

If your partner or other household members need healthcare, they should inform healthcare providers that they live with someone who is a carrier of ESBL-producing bacteria or CPO.

You do not need to inform your employer, colleagues, friends, your child's school, or daycare provider that you are a carrier of ESBL-producing bacteria or CPO.

What happens if I am admitted to a hospital or nursing home?

If you are a carrier of ESBL-producing bacteria or CPO, measures may be needed during your stay in a hospital or nursing home to reduce the risk of spreading the bacteria to others. The specific measures will depend on the situation.

These may include:

- A private room and private bathroom.
- Healthcare staff wearing personal protective equipment such as gloves and gowns.
- More frequent cleaning of rooms and equipment.
- In hospitals, isolation may sometimes be necessary. This means you may be asked to stay in your room and avoid using shared areas or having close contact with other patients.

Even if infection prevention and control measures are required, you are entitled to receive the same healthcare as any other patient.

Can I get rid of ESBL-producing bacteria or CPO?

There is currently no treatment that can eliminate carriage of ESBL-producing bacteria or CPO.

In some people, the bacteria disappear naturally over time, but this may take months or even years. Follow-up screening tests are not usually necessary.