

# Screening for Carbapenemase Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPEs) Pre-Operative

## Patient Information

Infection Prevention and Control Service

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## **What are Carbapenemase Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPEs)?**

CPEs are germs which are resistant to many antibiotics and therefore cannot be easily killed. CPEs are resistant to the group of antibiotics known as the carbapenems often used to treat severe infections.

## **Why am I being screened?**

It is known that CPEs can be picked up in some hospitals in the UK and abroad during routine health care. You have been identified as having been admitted to a hospital in the last twelve months and may be carrying the CPE germ.

## **How will I be screened?**

Screening for CPEs involves taking a rectal swab (from the back passage). The sample is then sent to the laboratory.

## **How will I get the results?**

Screening results are sent by the laboratory to the nurse in charge of the Pre-operative Clinic, who will inform you directly of the results. This will normally take less than two weeks.

## **What if I decline the offer of screening?**

Screening is performed because it is judged to be beneficial for your health at the time of operation. It is not compulsory and if you do not wish to undertake it then your operation will still proceed; If this is the case, you will be asked to remain in a side room whilst in the hospital, and staff caring for you will follow additional infection control precautions. If your operation requires the use of antibiotics these may be changed to cover the possibility of CPEs being present.

## **What if I have the CPE germ?**

CPEs do not cause problems to people who are otherwise fit and healthy, and you will not normally suffer any effects from carrying CPEs. Your operation will proceed as normal but you will be asked to remain in a single room for the duration of your stay and staff caring for you will carry out additional infection control precautions. Antibiotic treatment to prevent or treat any infections may be more complicated when you are carrying CPEs. Any treatment will be discussed with specialists in infection during your stay.

## **If I have the CPE germ will it ever disappear?**

Unfortunately, there is no medicine that can be used to eliminate CPEs. Sometimes our bodies will eventually clear these germs but even if this does not happen they are unlikely to affect your life after your operation has occurred. If you are re-admitted to hospital for other reasons you will be asked to remain in a side room and staff caring for you will use extra infection control precautions to prevent spread of the CPE germs.

## **Advantages of CPE screening**

Being screened for the CPE organism will tell you whether you carry this organism and will also ensure that all appropriate precautions can be taken before, during and after your operation, to keep the risk of infection to a minimum.

## **Risks of CPE screening**

There are no additional risks associated with the screening process.

## **Alternatives to CPE screening**

The only alternative to screening is to not be screened. Screening is not compulsory and if you decline, your operation will still go ahead. However, you will be asked to remain in a side room whilst in the hospital and staff caring for you will follow additional infection control precautions. If your operation requires the use of antibiotics these may be changed to cover the possibility of CPEs being present.

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## Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends and carers.

## Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm)

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## Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



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## How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use and store the information we hold about you, please take a look at our “how we use your information” leaflet which can be found on the Trust website: [https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient\\_information/leaflets](https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient_information/leaflets)

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This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, braille and other languages upon request. For more information please ask in department/ward.

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