Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Screening for Carbapenemase Producing Enterobacteriacae (CPEs) v8

Version number: **8**
Last modified date: **12th November 2026**

Screening for Carbapenemase Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPEs)

Patient Information

Infection Prevention and Control Department

- Author ID: KB
- Leaflet ref: M 001
- Version: 8
- Leaflet title: Screening for Carbapenemase Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPEs)
- Last review: January 2023
- Expiry Date: January 2025

What are Carbapenemase Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPEs)?

Enterobacteriaceae are bacteria which usually live harmlessly in the gut of humans. CPEs are Enterobacteriaceae which are resistant to many antibiotics and therefore cannot be easily treated. CPEs are resistant to the group of antibiotics known as the carbapenems often used to treat severe infections.

CPEs do not cause problems to people who are otherwise fit and healthy, and you will not normally suffer any effects from carrying CPEs. However, as infections caused by CPEs can be more difficult to treat, it is important to screen patients that may be at risk.

Why am I being screened?

The following patients will require screening:

- Those who are already known to be carrying CPE
- Those that have been an inpatient in a health care facility abroad or in another UK hospital with a higher incidence of CPE in the last 12 months
- Those patients that have shared the same bay (or ward) with a patient who has been found to be carrying CPE.

How will I be screened?

CPE screening involves inserting a swab 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. If the

result is negative, nothing further is required unless you are staying in hospital for some time. In that case, you may be asked to provide a sample on a regular basis, e.g. once a week, as a precautionary measure.

How will I get the results?

Screening results are sent by the laboratory to the nurse in charge of the ward who will inform you directly of the results. If you have been discharged prior to the result being obtained, and the result is positive, your General Practitioner will be informed.

What if I decline the offer of screening?

We can only take swabs from you if you give your consent to do so; however, to enable us to provide you with accurate diagnosis and treatment, we strongly recommend that you undergo CPE swabbing where advised. The more we understand when this infection is suspected, the more we can protect you and others. If you have any questions or concerns about this, please speak to a member of the nursing or medical staff.

What if the result is positive?

If the result is positive, your doctor or nurse will explain this to you in more detail and provide you with an information leaflet relating to positive results. You will be cared for in a single room until you leave hospital. No treatment is necessary unless you have an infection, and then antibiotics will be given.

If I have CPE, will it ever disappear?

Sometimes the body will eventually clear CPE but if this does not happen, they are unlikely to affect your life. If you are re-admitted to hospital for any reason, you will be asked to remain in a side room and staff caring for you will use infection control precautions to prevent the spread of CPE.

Advantages of CPE screening

Screening for CPE will help to identify if you are carrying CPE, ensure the appropriate treatment is given where needed and ensure that all appropriate precautions are taken during your hospital stay to keep the risk of spread to a minimum.

Where can I find out more information about CPE screening?

If you have any further questions about screening for CPE, please speak to a member of nursing or medical staff.



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