

What is CPE/CPO?

CPE/CPO stands for Carbapenemase Producing Enterobacteriaceae/ Carbapenemase Producing Organism. This group of bacteria (germs), e.g. *E. coli*, *Klebsiella* and *Enterobacter*, which are very resistant to antibiotics (including antibiotics called Carbapenems). These bacteria normally live harmlessly in the bowel, however if they enter into other areas such as the bladder or bloodstream, they can cause infection.

Infection caused by a CPE/CPO can be difficult to treat as these bacteria can produce enzymes (Carbapenemase) which destroy most available antibiotics. Carbapenem antibiotics are a powerful group of antibiotics that can only be given in hospital directly into the bloodstream.

Screening for CPE/CPO

Screening is carried out to identify those patients who have an infection due to CPE/CPO or who may be carriers of CPE/CPO (colonised).

Screening will be required if:

- You are a known CPE/CPO carrier or have a history of CPE/CPO from a previous hospital admission.
- You have been in an Intensive Care Unit in the previous 12 months or have been an inpatient in the Republic of Ireland or certain countries abroad in the past 12 months e.g. Greece, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, North Africa, Malta, Middle East, Pakistan, South East Asia, South/Central America, Turkey, Taiwan, USA and UK (Manchester & London).
- You have been identified as a 'contact' of a known CPE/CPO patient e.g. you were a patient in a ward at the same time as a patient with CPE/CPO.

Why do we need to know if you are carrying CPE/CPO?

If it is known that a patient is infected or colonised with CPE/CPO, the most effective antibiotics can be chosen early to treat any signs of an infection.

Robust infection prevention and control precautions will be put in place immediately to minimise the risk of spread of CPE/CPO to other patients.

How do you sample for CPE/CPO?

- A rectal swab stained with faeces or a sample of faeces, obtained within the first 24 hours following admission to hospital, will be taken with your consent.
- If you have any IV lines, a urinary catheter or any wounds, a swab of these should also be taken.
- Three screens will be required during your hospital stay (staff will advise you of when these need to be taken).

Screening if you are a 'contact' of a known CPE/CPO patient

If you have been identified as a 'contact' of a known CPE/CPO patient during a hospital stay, you will be informed by a member of staff and screening will be required. This will involve taking a CPE/CPO screen weekly for 4 weeks while you remain in hospital or another healthcare facility.

How long does it take for CPE/CPO results to come back from the laboratory?

- If your sample(s) is/are negative the result should be available within 3 working days.
- If CPE/CPO is suspected, the sample will have to be sent to a specialist laboratory for further testing to confirm if CPE/CPO is present.
- If the result is negative, and you are staying in hospital for some time, further samples may be taken.
- If the result is positive you will be given further information and isolated in a single room during your stay.

What if I am discharged home before the results come back?

- You can go home as soon as the Doctor says you are ready. You will not have to stay in hospital to wait for your results and, if your samples are positive, you will be contacted when the results are available.
- If you are living in a Nursing or Residential Home you may be required to complete 4 weeks of screening. Staff in the Care Home will let you know if this is required.
- Washing your hands at certain times e.g. after using the toilet and before preparing meals or eating, is the most important thing that you can do to prevent the spread of any bacteria including CPE/CPO.

For further information please contact a member of the Ward/Care Home staff.

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Screening Information leaflet