

Visitors should not sit on the bed and should not visit if they are unwell or have diarrhoea or vomiting. You should make sure that you wash your hands before eating and after using the toilet. Visitors should not go and visit any other patients on the ward (unless they speak to a staff nurse first).

What happens when I go home?

The presence of the bacteria (which may disappear quite naturally) should not affect you or your family at home. Usual personal hygiene and household cleaning is sufficient and there are no restrictions to activities or visitors. If you have a wound and it becomes red, swollen or oozes, or if you develop a fever then please contact your GP as usual. Your GP will be informed via your discharge documentation of the type of infection / colonisation you have had.

Where can I get further information?

The staff looking after you or the person you're visiting should be able to answer your questions. If they cannot please ask them to contact the Infection Prevention and Control Team who will be more than happy to come and talk to you.

You can get more information from: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england or by phoning NHS Choices on 111.

Comments, compliments, concerns or complaints

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is concerned about the quality of care you receive and strives to maintain high standards of health care.

However we do appreciate that there may be an occasion where you, or your family, feel dissatisfied with the standard of service you receive. Please do not hesitate to tell us about your concerns as this helps us to learn from your experience and to improve services for future patients.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

This service aims to advise and support patients, families and carers and help sort out problems quickly on your behalf. This service is available, and based, at The James Cook University Hospital but also covers the Friarage Hospital in Northallerton, our community hospitals and community health services. Please ask a member of staff for further information.

If you require this information in a different format please contact Freephone 0800 0282451

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Multi-resistant Gram-negative bacteria

Information for patients and carers

Infection Prevention and Control

What are Multi-resistant Gram-negative bacteria?

Gram-negative bacteria are germs that are often found living naturally in the human gut. For many reasons a small number of these bacteria can become resistant to the antibiotics that they have been sensitive to in the past. This may mean that some of the traditional antibiotics are no longer effective for treating infections caused by these germs.

'Multi-resistant Gram-negative bacteria' is a term covering many different bacteria. It does not include MRSA or *Clostridium Difficile*. Sometimes they are referred to as Extended-spectrum Beta lactamases which is shortened to ESBL or Amp C producing bacteria.

How have I got these bacteria and how are they spread?

Gram-negative bacteria can be passed from person to person directly or indirectly via contamination of hands or objects and can then be introduced into the mouth, wounds or other entry sites into the body. They can also be acquired from another part of your own body. Currently this is found most often in the long-term care or in the critical care settings. The problem is usually first identified, however, when an individual presents to hospital and a specimen of urine, blood or a wound swab is submitted to the microbiology lab to be tested.

Do these germs always cause infection?

No, people can often carry the bacteria without causing any harm (called 'colonisation') but sometimes may lead to infection.

What infections do Multi-resistant Gram-negative bacteria cause?

Most commonly Multi-resistant Gram-negative bacteria are detected in the urine. However they may also be found in other sites such as respiratory tract and wounds.

How can the spread of these bacteria to other people be prevented?

People in hospital are more at risk of infections because their body defences are weakened by illness, surgery, medication and the presence of invasive devices like 'drips' and urinary catheters.

Patients with positive sputum samples who are coughing and patients with exfoliative skin conditions and positive wound swabs have the greatest risk of spreading the infection. Patients with Multi-resistant Gram-negative bacteria are transferred to a single room.

Hospital staff involved in direct care will wear gloves and a full length gown whilst in the room to reduce the risk of transferring bacteria to other patients.

The prevention of spread of the bacteria relies mainly on everyone having good hand hygiene practices, particularly after using the toilet or caring for wounds or devices such as urinary catheters. The room will be cleaned daily and any equipment that is used on multiple patients will be cleaned after each use.

Can it be treated?

People who are simply colonised (have no symptoms of infection) with the bacteria do not require antibiotic treatment. In most people these antibiotic resistant bacteria will disappear on their own over time. However, despite being resistant to many of the usual antibiotics, be reassured that treatment options are still available if an infection should occur.

People may not have to stay in hospital until the infection is cleared up. You will be able to go home when your general condition allows regardless of whether you are still carrying the bacteria or not.

What about me and my visitors?

It is very unlikely that visitors or relatives will be affected. However all visitors should use the alcohol gel on entering and leaving your room.