



In this document the term patient is inclusive of patient, resident and client.

What are Carbapenemase Producing Organisms (CPOs)?

Carbapenemase Producing Organisms (CPOs) are a group of germs (bacteria) that are resistant to many different types of antibiotics. You might also hear the terms Carbapenem Resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE) or Carbapenemase Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPE).

People can carry CPO in their gastrointestinal tract (gut) without causing them any problems. However, if the bacteria spread to other areas of the body such as the bladder, lungs or bloodstream, they can cause an infection. Infections caused by CPOs are difficult to treat due to few effective antibiotics; therefore we must take extra care to prevent the spread of these bacteria to others.

Why am I being tested for CPO?

Because CPOs can cause serious infections in some people, we may test you even though you are not sick. This is called screening.

If you have received any type of health care outside of Canada or travelled to areas in the world where these bacteria are common, you may be tested for CPO by having a swab taken from your bottom (rectum) which will be sent to the laboratory for testing. You may also be tested if you live with someone or have been a roommate in a health care facility with someone who is positive for a CPO.

How do you get a CPO?

CPOs can be spread from one person to another by contact with hands, surfaces and equipment that have CPO on them. It is not spread through the air.

Can CPO be treated?

People who carry CPO without any symptoms do not need any treatment.

If you get an infection with a CPO, your doctor will decide on the best treatment with you. The antibiotics that will work against it are limited, but some options are available. In addition, some infections might be treated with other therapies, like draining the infection.

Will I be retested to see if I still have a CPO?

You will only be tested if you are admitted to the hospital. People who have CPO will likely carry it for a long time so follow-up testing is not recommended.





What happens if I have a CPO?

If you carry a CPO, or we think you may have it, some extra safety measures will be taken when you are admitted to a health care facility:

- You will be moved to a single room with your own bathroom.
- A sign will be placed on the door with instructions for all visitors and staff providing direct care to wear a gown and gloves when entering your room. If you are experiencing signs of a respiratory infection, they will also be directed to wear a mask and eye protection.
- Everyone will be reminded to clean their hands with alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) before going into your room, and after leaving your room.
- We will clean and disinfect the surfaces and equipment in your room regularly.
- If you are in the hospital, we will provide your care in your room. We want you to stay in your room unless it's medically necessary for you to leave (Example: going for a medical test or procedure).
- If you are in long term care, you may leave your room and participate in group activities without a gown and gloves, but before you leave your room, you must wash your hands, wear clean clothing and cover all open wounds.

If I have a CPO, can I have visitors?

Yes, your family and friends are welcome to visit you. We ask that your visitors follow the instructions on the sign posted on your door and clean their hands before and after visiting you.

If I have a CPO, what precautions should I take at home?

To prevent the spread of CPO at home:

- Everyone in your home should wash their hands often, especially:
 - ◆ Before preparing or eating food
 - ◆ Before and after changing wound dressings or bandages
 - ◆ After using the bathroom
 - ◆ After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- Wash dishes and laundry as usual. Hot water and dish or laundry detergent will kill CPO.
- Clean surfaces such as counters, sinks and frequently-touched surfaces with a disinfectant like Lysol® or Mr. Clean®.
- Tell your health care providers that you have a CPO. This helps prevent the spread to others and helps your doctor choose the right antibiotics, if necessary. Take antibiotics only as prescribed.

If I have a CPO, is my family at risk?

By taking precautions to prevent the spread of CPO, there is low risk to your family.

