

What is CPE/CPO?

CPE/CPO stands for Carbapenemase Producing Enterobacteriaceae/ Carbapenemase Producing Organism. This is a 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 get into another area 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 (proteins/chemicals) which destroy most of the available antibiotics. Carbapenem antibiotics are a powerful group of antibiotics that can only be given in hospital directly into the bloodstream.

Can CPE's/CPO's be harmful?

For most patients, CPEs/CPOs live harmlessly in the bowel and do not cause infection. Sometimes CPEs/CPOs can cause infection in patients, e.g. when they need intensive care nursing or while receiving chemotherapy.

CPEs/CPOs can cause infections, such as kidney infections, wound infections or in severe cases, blood infections. Doctors need to know as soon as possible if a patient is carrying CPE/CPO so that they can be managed appropriately and the most effective antibiotics can be chosen to treat any infection.

How do people get CPE/CPO?

Patients who have already taken a lot of antibiotics are more at risk of having a CPE/CPO. The more our body's normal bacteria are exposed to antibiotics the more likely they are to develop resistance.

CPEs/CPOs can spread between patients either through contact with a patient known to have CPE/CPO or by touching the environment that has been occupied by a patient with CPE/CPO e.g. bed rails, toilets, equipment etc.

How do you sample for CPE/CPO?

Sampling for CPE/CPO will involve taking a rectal swab stained with faeces or a sample of faeces within 24 hours of admission. It may also include taking swabs of other sites such as IV sites, catheter sites and wounds. Please see 'Screening Information' Leaflet for further information.

How can the spread of CPE/CPO be prevented?

- If you have been found to be positive for CPE/CPO you will be cared for in a single room either with an en-suite, toilet or a commode for your exclusive use.
- A Contact Precautions Poster may be placed on your door outlining the precautions for all staff entering your room.

- Staff will often be required to wear gloves and aprons or a gown when they are caring for you to reduce the risk of spreading CPE/CPO to other patients.
- Patients, staff and your visitors must pay particular attention to hand washing.
- Visitors are not required to wear gloves and aprons unless they are providing care for you.

What happens when you are ready to leave hospital?

You can go home as soon as your doctor says you are ready, the presence of CPE/CPO will not affect your discharge.

If you are going to another hospital or a Care Home your doctor or nurse should let the staff there know that you had a positive CPE/CPO sample so that they can take appropriate precautions to prevent any spread.

How can you help?

This leaflet has provided you with information on CPE/CPO. You should show this leaflet to healthcare professionals involved in your care in the future, and if you are admitted to hospital, so that proper precautions can be taken to help prevent the spread of CPE/CPO.

If you are attending your doctor, dentist, a hospital appointment, a podiatry/physiotherapy or any other health care related activity please let staff know that you have CPE/CPO or show them this leaflet. Healthcare professionals will then be able to take the necessary steps to manage your care appropriately.

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

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Patient Information leaflet