

# Extended-spectrum beta-lactamase producing organisms

## Infection Control Team Patient Information Leaflet

### What is an extended-spectrum beta-lactamase producing organism (ESBL)?

ESBLs are a group of bacteria that have developed the ability to produce an enzyme called beta-lactamase which breaks down certain types of antibiotics, making them ineffective so that infections are more difficult to treat. This is often referred to as antibiotic resistance.

These bacteria can be found in any part of your body but are most commonly found in the bowel.

### How do they spread?

ESBLs can spread between people through direct contact with each other, or by touching items or surfaces that the person with ESBLs may have touched, such as bed rails, toilets or equipment.

## How can it affect me?

Sometimes, you may have the bacteria in your body but do not feel unwell. This is called 'colonisation' as you have no signs of infection. Infections caused by an ESBL producing bacteria usually occur in the urine, but they can also occur in other parts of the body.

If you have an infection from ESBL producing bacteria, you may be transferred to a single room so your care can be managed correctly and to prevent spread to other patients. You can go home when you feel well.

## Can it be treated?

Yes. Although the bacteria are resistant to many antibiotics, treatment options for infections are still available, and these will be discussed with you by your doctor.

If you are colonised by the bacteria but do not feel unwell, you may not require any treatment for it.

## Can I help stop the spread of infection?

You can help prevent the spread of infection whilst in hospital by remembering some simple steps:

- Frequent hand washing is very important amongst staff, visitors and patients.
- After you have been to the toilet, and before you eat or drink, wash your hands.
- If you need help, ask a member of staff. Staff and visitors will be asked to clean their hands on entering and leaving your room. Please encourage them to do it.
- Please do not allow visitors to sit or lie on your bed or to use the patient toilets.
- Due to the many different types of infection in hospital, it is important that you do not visit patients or other parts of the hospital.

If you have any worries or concerns regarding your care, do not hesitate to ask someone for advice.

## Where can I get more information?

- Ask a member of your medical and nursing team.
- Contact the Infection Control Team on 01384 244174 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday).
- Alternatively, further information can be obtained from the Health Protection Agency website: [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

Infection Control Team on 01384 244174 (8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number: 01384 456111

**This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:**

<http://dgft.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/patient-information-leaflets/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email [dgft.patient.information@nhs.net](mailto:dgft.patient.information@nhs.net)

**This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.**

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Aceasta broșura poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru vă rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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