



What are ESBLs?

Extended Spectrum Beta-Lactamases (ESBLs) are enzymes produced by some bacteria, which can break down certain types of antibiotics, preventing them from working.

Bacteria that are able to produce these enzymes are resistant to many of the antibiotics that are commonly prescribed to treat infections.

What illnesses do ESBL-producing bacteria cause?

The most common bacteria that produce these enzymes are *E. coli* and *Klebsiella* which are bacteria that can live in your bowel without you being unwell or showing any signs or symptoms of infection (this is referred to as colonisation).

These bacteria cause infection if they get into an area of the body where they are not normally found, such as the urinary tract. Urine infection is the most commonly diagnosed infection, but infection in the lungs (chest), wounds and in the blood can also occur. Infections caused by ESBL-producing bacteria can be more difficult to treat because of antibiotic resistance, as there are fewer effective antibiotics to use.

Can infections caused by ESBL-producing bacteria be treated?

Yes, despite being resistant to many antibiotics, there are still antibiotics available to treat infections should they occur. Your doctor will discuss your antibiotic treatment options with you. Antibiotic treatment is not generally recommended for people who are colonised and who do not have signs or symptoms of infection.

How can ESBL-producing bacteria be spread?

As with other bacteria, ESBL-producing bacteria can be spread from person-to-person on unwashed hands, on equipment that is contaminated and has not been sufficiently cleaned, or can be picked up from the environment. This can happen both in the community and in hospital.

Who is at risk?

There are a number of factors that make a person more likely to become colonised or infected with ESBL-producing bacteria.

These include:

- having an underlying illness that makes a patient more susceptible to infection
- taking repeated courses of antibiotics
- a prolonged stay in hospital, and
- having a urinary catheter.

What happens if I am found to be colonised or infected with ESBL-producing bacteria?

If you are found to be colonised or infected with ESBL-producing bacteria you may be transferred to a single room. This is to minimise the risk to other patients on the ward who may be more vulnerable to the risk of infection.

Healthcare staff will also take extra precautions to prevent the spread of infection to other patients, for example they may use disposable gloves and aprons.

Staff members do not mind if you remind them to clean their hands.

Make sure you wash your hands after using the toilet and before you eat.

Try not to touch wounds, catheters and other devices like drips.

If I am colonised or infected with ESBL-producing-bacteria, how long do I have to stay in a single room?

This will vary from patient to patient. If you have symptoms or signs of infection or have an indwelling catheter or diarrhoea you will usually remain in a single room for the duration of your hospital stay.

It is not known how long colonisation with ESBL-producing bacteria persists but in most circumstances it is not necessary to re-test or swab you to check whether these bacteria are still present. ►

ESBLs

(Extended spectrum Beta-Lactamases)

information for patients,
carers, relatives and visitors



For more information:

- ask your hospital doctor or nurse
- ask your GP or Practice Nurse
- look on NHS Choices www.nhs.uk
- or Health Protection Agency
www.hpa.org.uk or Public Health England
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england.

Surrey & Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust
Trust Headquarters, East Surrey Hospital,
Canada Avenue, Redhill, Surrey RH1 5RH
Telephone: **01737 768511**
Web: www.surreyandsussex.nhs.uk

The Patient Advice & Liaison Service can be
contacted on telephone **01737 231958**.

**This leaflet can be provided in other
languages and formats upon request.
Please telephone 01737 231958 or
email pals@sash.nhs.uk**

Esta informação está disponível em outros idiomas e formatos,
incluindo letras maiores. Para auxílio contactar 01737 231958.

我們可以用其他語言和格式來提供這些資料，包括大字體。欲獲得協助，
請致電 01737 231958

आ माहिती बीछ अन्ध भाषाओमां अने स्वरुपोमां उपलब्ध थशे, जेमां भोटो अक्षरोनो समावेश करेद
छे. मद्दद माटे संपर्क करो 01737 231958

مات دوسری زبانوں اور صورتوں میں بھی مل سکتا ہے جن میں بڑے حروف میں کبھی گئی عبارت شامل ہے، مدد لینے کے
لئے 01737 231958 پر فون کریں۔

Can I have visitors?

The risk to visitors and relatives is low if they are fit and well. If they have been unwell in the last 48 hours please ask them not to visit until they are feeling better.

Prevention of infection rests mainly on good hand hygiene for you and your visitors. This includes cleaning hands before entering and leaving the ward and before helping you to eat and drink.

Will I have to stay longer in hospital?

You will not have to stay in hospital until the ESBL infection has cleared. You will be able to go home when your condition allows, regardless of whether you still have ESBL-producing bacteria or not. This should not be a risk to your family or friends.

Normal personal hygiene (baths/showers) is sufficient, as is normal household cleaning. Clothes should be laundered as normal.

What is East Surrey Hospital doing about ESBLs?

Infection prevention and control is taken very seriously and there are many guidelines and procedures in place to reduce the risks of acquiring or spreading infection. All staff here work hard to try and ensure that healthcare-associated infections are reduced so that the risk to patients are minimised.

If you have any worries or require further information, please contact your hospital doctor, your GP or Practice Nurse. ●