

# Extended Spectrum Beta Lactamase (ESBL) and Amp C Beta Lactamase Producers (Amp C's)

## What is ESBL/Amp C?

ESBL and Amp C are bacteria which produce an enzyme that stops certain antibiotics from working. They are usually found in the bowel and live there without causing any problems. However, occasionally they can cause infections, most commonly in the urinary tract, but sometimes in wounds or in the bloodstream.

These infections can be treated, but by using different antibiotics.

## How does ESBL/Amp C affect me?

Once your infection has been treated these bacteria may continue to live in the bowel. This is called *colonisation* and **will not** affect your health.

To prevent these bacteria from spreading to other patients, additional infection control precautions are necessary whilst you are in hospital. This may include being cared for in a single room during your stay.

## How are ESBL's/Amp C's spread?

ESBL's/Amp C's can be spread from person to person via the hands after contact with an infected patient or equipment.

## Infection control precautions

To avoid the spread of infection staff will wear gloves and aprons and you may be looked after in a single room whilst in hospital. If this is not possible separate toilet facilities will be provided.

The most important measure is to ensure that good hand washing practices are followed by staff, patients and visitors. You must ensure that your hands are always washed, using soap and water, after using the toilet and before eating.

## How will this affect my visitors?

There are no special restrictions to visitors, however if you have any concerns please ask your nurse.

Your visitors must wash their hands and then use the alcohol hand rub on entering and leaving your room and before helping you to eat or drink. Visitors do not need to wear aprons and gloves.

## How can ESBL's/Amp C's be treated?

Despite being resistant to the more commonly used antibiotics, treatment options are available. If antibiotic treatment is necessary, your doctor will discuss this with you.

Colonisation does not require treating and it will not cause you any harm. There is no screening currently available to see how long you may be colonised with these bacteria.

## Will I have to stay in hospital?

No, you will be able to leave hospital when your doctor says you are medically fit.

## What happens when I go home?

- Good hygiene practice should continue at home, including hand washing after using the toilet, before preparing food and before eating.
- Your normal household cleaning method is sufficient and your laundry can be washed in the usual way.
- You do not need to restrict visitors or your activities at home.
- If you are admitted back into hospital, please inform the medical team that you have previously had an 'ESBL' or 'Amp C' identified. The need to care for you in a side room will be reassessed as it may not always be necessary.
- If you need to see your GP regarding an infection please inform them that you have previously had an 'ESBL' or 'Amp C' identified, as this may affect any treatment.

## Useful contact

Health Protection Agency

Website: [www.hpa.nhs.uk](http://www.hpa.nhs.uk)

If you have any queries, or require further information  
please speak to your nurse or doctor.

Alternatively you may wish to arrange to talk to an Infection Control Specialist.  
To do so, please ask ward or department staff to arrange this.

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