

Candida auris

What is *Candida auris*?

Candida auris (or *C. auris*, say can-dee-da ow-ris) is a type of multi-drug resistant fungus. It was discovered in 2009 and has quickly spread to many countries.

The medicines commonly used to treat other *Candida* infections often don't work for this type of *Candida* (multi-drug resistant). It can cause serious infections that are difficult to treat.

How would I know I have a *C. auris* infection?

Symptoms of a *C. auris* infection depend on the part of the body affected. *C. auris* can cause many different types of infections, including ear infections, wound infections, and bloodstream infections.

The most common symptoms are a fever and chills that don't get better after being treated with antibiotics. People with other medical problems might not notice any symptoms at all.

Some people carry *C. auris* somewhere on their bodies but do not have an infection or symptoms of infection. This means the person is a 'carrier' of the fungus (called colonization). Without knowing it, these people can pass the fungus to another person.



Petrie dish growing *C. auris*

Who is most likely to get *C. auris*?

C. auris infections mainly affect people who already have other medical problems. Healthy people usually do not get *C. auris* infections. But if these people are carriers, they can pass *C. auris* on to others who are not as healthy.

There is a greater chance of being a carrier or getting a *C. auris* infection if a person has:

- received healthcare outside of Canada
- travelled to the countries where *C. auris* is more common
- received frequent healthcare services in Canada and come into contact in those settings with others who have travelled

How is *C. auris* spread?


C. auris can spread from the bodies of people who are carriers or who are infected to other people or nearby objects. The fungus can live on objects and surfaces for weeks. The key is to prevent the spread.

How to stop the spread of Candida auris


In the hospital

If you are a carrier of *C. auris*, you will be 'in isolation' to prevent it from spreading to other patients in the hospital.

Being **in isolation** means:

- We post an isolation sign the door of your room.
- Anyone entering your room must put on gloves and a gown each time they enter. 
- We ask you to use your own washroom or commode (toilet on wheels).
- **Do not share** your washroom or commode with other patients or your visitors.
- We ask your visitors to clean their hands before entering and after leaving your room.

What you can do:

- **Clean your hands often** with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water, especially after using the toilet, before and after eating or drinking, and before leaving your room. 
- Stay in your hospital room as much as possible.
- You can go to other areas of the hospital for treatment and tests needed for your care. Follow your healthcare providers' instructions for protecting yourself and others before they take you to other areas of the hospital.
- Ask your healthcare providers when and where you may walk outside your room.
- Do not use common areas such as the patient kitchen, gift shop or cafeteria.
- Remember to always clean your hands before leaving your room.

At home

C. auris can spread to healthy people but they are less likely to get sick compared to a person with medical conditions.

If we have told you that you have a *C. auris* infection or are a carrier:

- Wash your hands often, especially after going to the bathroom and before preparing and eating food.
- People who live with you should wash their hands often.
- Do not share personal care items such as washcloths, towels, toothbrushes or bar soap.
- Use bleach to clean bathrooms and other frequently touched surfaces (for example, light switches, water taps, and toilet handles) once a day and more often if visibly soiled.
- Wash non-disposable cleaning cloths after each use.
- Cover open draining wounds with a clean bandage.
- Tell anyone helping with your personal care (such as changing bandages) to wear disposable gloves.

If you have to return to the hospital:

- Tell the nurse or doctor that you have *C. auris*. Knowing you carry this fungus will help your providers decide on the best way to treat you.

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