

Carbapenemase Producing Organisms in Long-term Care

Information for Residents

What are Carbapenemase Producing Organisms (CPO)?

Carbapenemase (say *car-ba-pena-maze*) Producing Organisms (CPO) are germs that make enzymes that stop some antibiotics (carbapenems) from working. These germs become resistant to many antibiotics.

CPO can live in a person's gut without having any signs of illness. If a person gets a CPO infection, many antibiotics no longer work and it is harder to treat the infection.

These germs are found in a number of countries around the world, including in a few Canadian health care settings. You can get the germ by coming in contact with body fluids from an infected person, such as their bowel movements (poop), urine (pee), blood, wounds, or sputum (phlegm).

Note: These germs can remain in the body even after the infection is gone.

What are the signs of CPO?

Some people carry it in their gut without showing any signs of illness.

You could have signs of an infection such as fever, feeling generally unwell, having little or no energy, and, depending on where the infection is, changes in how your body organs work.

Can CPO be treated?

If you are healthy, you do not need to be treated.

If CPO is causing an infection, your doctor decides how best to treat the infection. This could include certain antibiotics that will work for these germs.

How can I stop the spread of CPO?

Anyone who has the germ can spread it by touching people and surfaces or equipment.

The most important thing you can do is to **clean your hands often**.



Use soap and water or an alcohol based hand rub.

Clean your hands before and after meals, after using the toilet, and before leaving your room.

Here's what we do to stop the spread.

- We will wear a gown and gloves when providing you certain personal care, such as when we help you bath, dress, change positions, and go to the toilet.
- We also will wear protection when we change linens and when we work with any tubes you might have like feeding tubes, tracheostomy tubes, and urinary catheters.
- In some situations, we might also wear a medical mask with eye protection.
- We might ask you to stay in your room if you have an infection caused by CPO.



We understand that these precautions might be a challenge for you and your family. At the same time, we need to protect others from CPO. We thank you for helping us stop the spread of these germs.

Can I have visitors if I have CPO?

Of course you can! To us stop the spread of germs, here is what they need to do.

They must do the following:

- Clean their hands before entering and when leaving your room.
- Leave the building after visiting you, not stopping to visit anyone else.

We might also ask them to do the following:

- Report to the nurses' station before entering your room.
- Wear a gown and gloves when taking part in your care, such as helping you dress, bath, or go to the toilet.