

What is Royal Surrey County Hospital (RSCH) doing about ESBL?

Infection prevention and control is taken very seriously at the RSCH. There are many guidelines and procedures in place to minimise the risks of acquiring an infection. Like other healthcare organisations the RSCH has to report all blood stream infections caused by ESBL producing E.coli to the Department of Health.

If you require any further information please speak to the nurse in charge.

Key reference source and further information

- www.gov.uk/topic/health-protection/infectious-diseases

Contact details

The Infection Control Team

Royal Surrey County Hospital
Egerton Road, Guildford GU2 7XX

Telephone: 01483 571122 **ext** 4580

Royal Surrey County Hospital (RSCH) NHS Foundation Trust fully subscribes to the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) *Being Open* best practice framework, November 2010.

PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located right as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–4.00pm
Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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Patient information leaflet

Extended-Spectrum Beta-Lactamase (ESBL)



Infection Control Department

What is ESBL?

ESBL stands for Extended-Spectrum Beta-Lactamase. ESBL is an enzyme that is produced by some bacteria that live in the gut such as E.coli and Klebsiella. It causes resistance to certain antibiotics.

What illnesses do ESBL producing bacteria cause?

E.coli and Klebsiella, although common bacteria that live in the gut can cause infection in humans. Infection tends to be in the urinary tract, but they can also cause infection in the lungs, wounds and the blood. Treatment of infections caused by these bacteria is more difficult because of the antibiotic resistance.

Most infections occur in people with underlying medical conditions as well as those who have been taking antibiotics and previous hospital admissions.

Sometimes people can carry these bacteria in the body without showing any signs or symptoms of infection. This is referred to as colonisation. It is not known how long colonisation can last but it is not necessary to stay in hospital. Antibiotics are not normally required to treat colonisation.

How are ESBL producing bacteria spread?

These bacteria can be spread in two ways:

- **Directly** – from person to person on the hands.
- **Indirectly** – from contaminated equipment which has not been cleaned properly.

What happens when a patient is found to have an ESBL producing bacterial infection?

Patients diagnosed with this infection may be transferred to a single room. This is to reduce the risk to other patients on the ward. People in hospital are at greater risks to infection because of illness, surgery and invasive devices e.g. urinary catheters and drips.

Ensure you wash your hands after using the toilet and before you eat. Avoid touching any drips, drains and catheters etc.

Clinical staff will also take extra precautions to prevent the spread to other patients. For example they may use disposable gloves and aprons. Hand hygiene is also vitally important.

Can ESBL producing bacterial infections be treated?

Yes, there are still antibiotics that will treat infection effectively. Your doctors may need to discuss treatment with the Consultant Microbiologist and / or Antibiotic Pharmacist.

How long do patients with ESBL producing bacteria have to stay in a single room?

Isolation will need to be continued until the infection has cleared. This will vary from patient to patient.

What about my visitors?

Your friends and family can still come and visit but:

- Your visitors must clean their hands before and after visiting. Alcohol sanitising foam is effective. However, they can wash their hands with soap and water if preferred.
- Your visitors do not need to wear any protective clothing e.g. gloves and aprons.
- Your visitors must not sit or lie on your bed.
- Your visitors must not use the toilet in your room. Public facilities are available at main reception.
- Your visitors (if visiting other friends) must visit them before visiting you.

When can I go home?

You will be discharged home when your clinical condition allows. This may be before your infection is totally cleared; however, this is not a risk to your family or friends. If you are prescribed antibiotics at discharge – remember to complete the course.

- Colonisation will not affect your discharge date.
- Normal personal hygiene (baths / shower) is encouraged.
- Normal household cleaning is adequate.
- Clothes should be laundered as normal.