



CARBAPENEM-RESISTANT ENTEROBACTERIACEAE (CRE) FACT SHEET

WHAT IS CRE?

CRE are a family of germs that are difficult to treat because they have high levels of resistance to antibiotics. Healthy people usually do not get CRE infections- they usually happen to patients in hospitals, nursing homes, and other healthcare settings. Patients whose care requires devices like ventilators, urinary catheters, or intravenous catheters, and patients taking long courses of certain antibiotics are most at risk for CRE infections.

HOW DO YOU GET CRE?

To get a CRE infection, a person must be exposed to CRE germs. CRE germs are usually spread person to person through contact with infected or colonized people, particularly contact with wounds or stool. CRE can cause infections when they enter the body, often through medical devices like ventilators, intravenous catheters, urinary catheters, or wounds caused by injury or surgery.

SYMPTOMS

The symptoms that develop with CRE infection are the ones you would get with any other bacterial infection such as: fever, feeling generally unwell, rapid pulse rate, redness, swelling, pain or heat at a specific site.

TREATMENT

Many people with CRE will have the germ in or on their body without it producing an infection. These people are said to be colonized with CRE, and they do not need antibiotics for the CRE. If the CRE are causing an infection, the antibiotics that will work against it are limited but some options are often available. In addition, some infections might be able to be treated with other therapies, like draining the infection. Strains that have been resistant to all antibiotics are very rare but have been reported. Discuss treatment options with your doctor.

PREVENTION

- Healthcare personnel and facilities can follow infection-control precautions provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Take antibiotics only as prescribed
- Expect all doctors, nurses, and other healthcare providers wash their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before and after touching your body or tubes going into your body
- Wash your hands thoroughly after using the bathroom, before preparing or eating food, before changing wound dressing or bandages, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing

DPHD EFFORTS:

Reports of suspected and confirmed cases of disease are made to the Delaware Public Health District. The Health District investigates potential sources of illness, conducts surveillance for the spread of disease, and engages in community outreach and education.