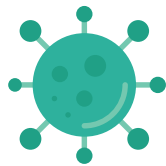


Carbapenemase-Producing Organisms (CPO): Information Sheet for Patients on Hemodialysis and their Families



What are Carbapenemase-Producing Organisms (CPO)?

Carbapenemase-producing organisms (CPO) are bacteria that can live in the gut (digestive system) and are resistant to specific types of antibiotics known as carbapenems.



Why are CPO a concern?

People who develop a CPO infection are usually already ill for other reasons. If the CPO bacteria spread from the gut to other parts of the body, it can cause an infection which can be very hard to treat because many antibiotics don't work. CPO do not cause infection in healthy people.



CPO are found in many countries, particularly in health care facilities. Within Canada, some hospitals and hemodialysis (HD) units, especially with frequent travelers from other countries, may also have CPO present. Patients who have received HD or hospital care in another country OR in a Canadian hospital or HD unit known to have CPO are at increased risk for picking up CPO bacteria.



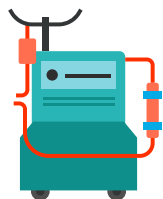
To prevent these bacteria from spreading to other people, all HD units in BC routinely screen:

- All patients who have travelled outside Canada
- All patients who were recently admitted to hospital or received treatment in another HD unit in Canada known to have CPO.



How do you test for CPO?

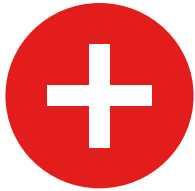
As CPO lives in your gut, a swab is placed briefly inside your rectum (bottom). This occurs the first HD run after you return and again one and three weeks later. Lab results are usually available within 2-5 days.



Can I keep dialyzing in my “home unit” while waiting for results?

During the waiting period, you will be placed on “contact precautions,” receive dialysis in a single room or a separate area of the HD unit and use your own toilet or commode (or receive specific instructions when going

to the bathroom). Most HD units can accommodate these needs but not all. Based on your specific needs and the resources in your dialysis unit, some patients may need to go to another dialysis unit. **This may mean a temporary move to another city or town.** If you have questions, please talk with your nurse.



What if I test positive for CPO?

If you test positive for CPO, the same precautions are continued for as long as you are on dialysis. If this is not possible in your “home unit,” you will be permanently transferred to another unit **which may mean a permanent move to another city or town.** Your care team will work closely with you to minimize disruption wherever possible. If you have questions, please talk with your nurse.

If I test positive for CPO, will I need treatment?

If you do not have an infection, you are “colonized”, but do not need treatment.

If you have an infection, you will be given specific antibiotics that work for these specific bacteria.

If I test positive for CPO (even if I don’t have an infection), can I prevent spreading CPO to others?

CPO spreads from person to person by direct contact if hands are not cleaned routinely.



Wash your hands often using soap and water, alcohol hand rub or hand wipes, before and after using the toilet and before and after eating, drinking or putting anything in your mouth. Wash your hands when you enter and leave the HD unit.



Things to help to prevent the spread of CPO while you are in the HD unit:

- Use the toilet or commode assigned to you. Avoid public toilets in the hospital or HD unit.
- Family and visitors must clean their hands before entering your HD area. If they are providing care such as helping you to the washroom, they should wear gloves and a gown.
- Health care providers will clean their hands, put on gloves and wear a gown before providing care or touching surfaces, objects or equipment in your HD station area.



Things to help to prevent the spread of CPO at home:



- Wash your hands often, especially after going to the bathroom, touching infected areas and before preparing and eating food. People who live with you should also clean their hands often.



- Do not share personal care items such as wash cloths, towels, toothbrushes or bars of soap.



- Clean bathrooms and frequently touched surfaces such as light switches, water taps, toilet handles once a day. No special cleaning agents are required.



- Wash cleaning cloths after each use.



- Wash clothing in the usual manner.



- Cover open draining wounds with a clean dressing or bandage.



If you need to go to the emergency department, have surgery or go to a hospital, please tell your health care provider that you have tested positive for CPO.

References

1. PICNet website, About CPOs, www.picnet.ca/surveillance/cpo/
2. BC Centre for Disease Control, PHSA Laboratories, BC Ministry of Health, CPO Fact Sheet, www.bccdc.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Educational%20Materials/Epid/Other/CPOBacteriainBC_factsheet_feb7_2014.pdf
3. HealthLinkBC, CPO, File 120, www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/carbapenemase-producing-organisms-cpo
4. Providence Health Care, CPO Fact Sheet for Patients and Families, April 2018.
5. Vancouver Coastal Health, CPO Fact Sheet for Patients and Families (Acute Care), June 2016.