

Extended Spectrum Beta Lactamase (ESBL)

Author: Kevin Baker, Head of Infection Prevention & Control



James Paget
University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

What is ESBL?

ESBL stands for Extended Spectrum Beta-lactamase.

Beta-lactamase is an enzyme produced by different kinds of bacteria which break down certain types of antibiotics.

ESBL producing bacteria are resistant to some of the antibiotics used to treat infection when it occurs.

This resistance makes infection more difficult to treat.

How might ESBL affect me?

Infection from ESBL producing bacteria occurs mainly in urine, but may also affect wounds and the blood. Sometimes these bacteria can be inside your body but not make you unwell. This is called colonisation instead of infection, as you feel well with no signs or symptoms of infection.

How do you get infected with ESBL?

- From person to person directly or indirectly
- Via contaminated hands or objects introduced into the mouth (faecal-oral spread)
- On the hands of patients, relatives and health care workers after contact with an infected patient or equipment if hands are not washed properly.

Can anyone get it?

- People in hospital are more at risk of infection because their bodies defences are weakened by illness, surgery, drugs and procedures.
- Prevention of infection rests mainly on encouraging good hand decontamination practices amongst staff, visitors and patients.
- Due to different types of infections in hospitals, it is important that you do not visit patients in other parts of the ward or other wards in the hospital.

How do you treat ESBL?

Despite being resistant to many of the normal antibiotics, treatment options are still available should infection occur.

If antibiotic treatment is necessary your doctor will discuss this with you.

Will I have to stay in hospital until ESBL infection has cleared?

Patients do not usually have to stay in hospital until the ESBL producing bacteria has cleared. You will be sent home when your general condition allows, regardless of whether you are still positive for ESBL or not.

How will this affect my visitors?

- Visitors will be requested to wash their hands or use hand gel on entering and leaving the ward and before and after helping with personal care. They will also need to decontaminate their hands if helping you to eat and drink.
- Please do not allow your visitors to sit on the beds.

What happens when I go home?

- You may be discharged from hospital before your infection has cleared.
- The infection will not affect your family, friends or sex life when you are home.
- Usual personal hygiene and household cleaning is sufficient and restriction of activities or visitors is not necessary.

Further Information

Please speak with an Infection Prevention & Control Nurse.

Tel: 01493 453136

Feedback

We want your visit to be as comfortable as possible. Please talk to the person in charge if you have any concerns. If the ward/ department staff are unable to resolve your concern, please ask for our Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) information. Please be assured that raising a concern will not impact on your care. **Before you leave the hospital you will be asked to complete a Friends and Family Test feedback card.** Providing your feedback is vital in helping to transform NHS services and to support patient choice.

Trust Values

Courtesy and respect

- A welcoming and positive attitude
- Polite, friendly and interested in people
- Value and respect people as individuals
So people feel **welcome**

Attentively kind and helpful

- Look out for dignity, privacy & humanity
- Attentive, responsive & take time to help
- Visible presence of staff to provide care
So people feel **cared for**

Responsive communication

- Listen to people & answer their questions
- Keep people clearly informed
- Involve people
So people feel **in control**

Effective and professional

- Safe, knowledgeable and reassuring
- Effective care / services from joined up teams
- Organised and timely, looking to improve
So people feel **safe**



The hospital can arrange for an interpreter or person to sign to assist you in communicating effectively with staff during your stay. Please let us know.

For a large print version of this leaflet, contact PALS 01493 453240