

Extended Spectrum Beta-Lactamase Producing Bacteria (ESBL)

Information Sheet for Patients & Visitors

ESBLs Explained:

ESBL-producing bacteria are a group of bacteria that produce enzymes called 'beta-lactamases', which live in the gastrointestinal tract (bowels). These enzymes break down commonly used antibiotics so that the antibiotics don't work, and a different antibiotic may need to be used to treat the infection. ESBL-producing bacteria are often present with no signs of illness (this is called "colonization") but can occasionally cause infections.

How ESBLs Are Spread:

ESBL-producing bacteria can be spread to other people through direct contact, if hands are unwashed, or indirectly by contact with dirty equipment, particularly equipment in contact with urine or feces, such as bedpans, catheters, and urinals.

Special Precautions for ESBLs:

Special precautions are taken to stop ESBL from spreading to other patients in the facility including:

- Special accommodations may be required for infection control purposes.
- A long-sleeved gown and gloves may be worn by everyone who cares for you.
- A door sign may be placed to your room to remind others about the special precautions.
- The room and the equipment used in the room will be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Everyone must clean their hands before entering and leaving your room.

Family & Visitors Protocols While at St. Mary's:

Your family and visitors will be required to clean their hands with hand sanitizer and wear a long-sleeved gown and gloves while in your room. Before leaving your room, visitors must remove the gloves and gown and dispose of them in the garbage container and/or the laundry hamper located in your room and clean their hand with hand sanitizer. These precautions will help prevent further transmission.

After You Leave St. Mary's:

- Everyone who might help you with your personal care should practice good hand hygiene.
- Everyone should wash hands before making any food and before eating.
- Everyone should wash hands well after using the toilet.
- Clothing may be laundered in the usual manner along with the rest of the household laundry.
- No special cleaning of furniture or items (e.g., dishes) in the home is required.
- If you share a bathroom at home, clean the toilet and sink at least weekly with a household cleanser.
- Always tell your physician, paramedics, nurses, or other care providers that you have ESBL. This helps prevent spread to others.

Good Hand Hygiene Practices:

- After using the bathroom
- After blowing your nose
- Before eating and drinking
- Before you leave your room
- Before and after you touch your dressing or wounds
- When your hands are visibly dirty



Reference:

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/a/2013/aros-screening-testing-surveillance.pdf>

Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee. Annex A – Screening, testing and surveillance for antibiotic-resistant organisms (AROs). Annexed to: Routine Practices and Additional Precautions in All Health Care Settings. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2013