

Carbapenem-Resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE)

What are CRE?

- CRE are a family of germs that are **difficult to treat** because they are highly resistant to antibiotics (most antibiotics do not work).
- These bacteria normally live in the human intestines, but can cause infection when they spread beyond the gut.
- CRE is spread person to person through contact with people who are infected or colonized with CRE, especially through contact with wounds or stool.
- **Colonization** means a person has the bacteria in or on their body without it causing an infection.
- CRE infections usually happen in patients who are in hospitals or nursing homes for other medical reasons.



To prevent CRE infections you should:

- ⇒ Take antibiotics according to your doctor's instructions
- ⇒ Expect your healthcare providers to wash their hands before and after touching you. If they do not wash their hands, ask them to do so.
- ⇒ **Wash your hands often**, especially:
 - *Before preparing or eating food
 - *Before and after changing wound dressings or bandages
 - *After using the bathroom
 - *After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing



What can healthcare workers do? Healthcare workers can help prevent CRE infections by:

- ♦ Washing their hands before and after having contact with a patient
- ♦ Properly cleaning and disinfecting a patient's room and equipment
- ♦ Only prescribing antibiotics when it is necessary



Testing - In order to protect you and other patients, your doctor might order a test to determine if you carry CRE in order to prevent the bacteria from being spread to others.

People who carry CRE without an infection are said to be **colonized**, and do not need antibiotics for CRE.

For more information about CRE, visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/hai/organisms/cre/> or

<https://www.colorado.gov/cdphe/carbapenem-resistant-enterobacteriaceae-cre>



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