

What happens when I go home?

- There are no special precautions that you or your family need to take when you return home. Usual personal hygiene and household cleaning is adequate. You do not need to restrict your activities or visitors.
- Health-care staff who visit you at home may continue to use aprons and gloves when providing care in your home. This is normal practice. They will wash their hands before and after visiting you.

How can I obtain more information?

- Please do not hesitate to ask the staff if you have any further questions.
- Ask to speak to a member of the Infection Control Team Member.

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Extended Spectrum Beta-Lactamase *producing bacteria* **(ESBL)**

**Information for patients
in hospital
and their family/whanau**

Infection Control Service

What is an ESBL?

- ESBL stands for Extended Spectrum Beta-Lactamase.
- ESBL's are enzymes made by some bacteria. The enzymes break down certain types of antibiotics and stop them working.
- The bacteria making these enzymes usually live in the bowel.
- ESBL-producing bacteria have been around for a number of years. They can be found in patients who have been in hospital but also in people in the community who have not been near a hospital.

How might ESBL affect me?

- Although ESBL-producing bacteria can infect your urine, wounds or the bloodstream, more commonly these bacteria reside in your bowel without making you sick. This is called colonisation, as you feel well and have no signs or symptoms of infection.
- ESBL-producing bacteria are resistant to some of the common antibiotics used to treat infection. This resistance means there are fewer options for antibiotic treatment if an infection develops.

- There are still antibiotics that can be used to treat infections.

How are ESBL's spread?

- By direct or indirect contact with other people already carrying the bacteria.
- Usually spread via the hands.

What will happen now I have an ESBL?

- If you are in hospital you are more at risk of infection because your body's normal defence mechanisms are weakened by illness, surgery, drugs or procedures.
- You will be given a single room while you are in hospital to help prevent spread to other unwell patients and to ensure your treatment is managed correctly.
- Staff will wear aprons and gloves while in your room.
- The best way to prevent spread is by encouraging staff, visitors and patients to maintain good hand washing practices.
- As people in hospital are often at risk of infection, you will be asked not to visit patients in other parts of the ward or in other wards in the hospital.

How can ESBL be treated?

- Despite being resistant to many of the normal antibiotics, treatment options are still available should infection occur.
- If antibiotic treatment is necessary your doctors will discuss this with you.

Will I have to stay in hospital?

- It is not necessary for you to stay in hospital until the ESBL is cleared.
- Once your general condition allows, you can go home even if you are still carrying the ESBL-producing bacteria.

How will this affect my visitors?

- Healthy people are probably at no greater risk of developing an infection from ESBL's than they are from any other bacteria which normally live in the bowel.
- Visitors will be asked to wash their hands when they enter and leave your room and before helping you eat or drink.
- As per usual practice, please ask your family/whanau and friends not to visit if they are unwell e.g. have coughs or colds, vomiting & diarrhoea or open wounds.