

ESBL and AmpC information sheet

What is extended spectrum beta-lactamase (ESBL) and AmpC beta-lactamase?

- ESBL and AmpC are special proteins produced by bacteria known as ESBL and AmpC producers.
- ESBL and AmpC break down and destroy some antibiotics, such as penicillins and cephalosporins (which are widely used). This results in the bacteria developing a resistance to antibiotics, meaning the medicine may no longer be effective.
- Resistance to antibiotics can make any infection caused by the bacteria difficult to treat.
- ESBL/AmpC-producing bacteria are commonly found in the bowel/gut of humans.
- Infection from ESBL/AmpC producing bacteria can occur in the urinary tract but may also infect wounds and sometimes causes blood infections.
- People who have been on antibiotics may be more likely to have these bacteria.
- You can carry ESBL/AmpC producers without any ill effects and with no infection being present. This is called colonisation.

What does it mean to have an ESBL/AmpC-positive result?

If the result is positive, your doctor or nurse will be able to discuss this with you in detail. If you have an infection, you will need to have antibiotics. However, if there are no signs of infection and you are simply carrying the bacteria, no treatment will be needed. We sometimes care for patients with ESBL/AmpC in a single room, ideally with toilet facilities.

Our staff will clean their hands regularly and use gloves, aprons, and other personal protective equipment where required while they are looking after you. Regular hygiene measures such as cleaning of your environment and equipment used for your care will be undertaken by staff.

It is important you wash your hands frequently, especially after going to the toilet and before having your meals. You should avoid touching any wounds or medical devices (if you have any), such as your urinary catheter tube and your intravenous drip, particularly at the point where it is inserted into your body.

We will ask your visitors to wash their hands on entering and leaving your room, and to avoid sitting on your bed and instead use the chairs provided. We may ask them to wear an apron and gloves if they are assisting with your personal care, please speak with staff about this.

How does ESBL/AmpC-producing bacteria spread?

ESBL/AmpC can be passed from person-to-person, usually via hands and contaminated equipment and environment.

What will happen when I go home?

There is a chance that you may still be a carrier when you go home. No special measures or treatment are required. Any infection will have been treated prior to your discharge. You should carry on as normal, maintaining good hand hygiene.

If you have any concerns, you may wish to contact your GP for advice.

Before you leave hospital, ask the doctor or nurse to give you a letter advising that you have been colonised with ESBL/AmpC. This will be useful for the future, and it is important that you make healthcare staff aware of it whenever you have contact in the future, including healthcare in the community (at home or clinics). If you are admitted to hospital, let the hospital staff know that you are, or have been, a carrier and show them the letter.

Further information

If you would like any further information, please speak to a member of your healthcare team. They may contact Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) for you.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can listen to your concerns, suggestions, or queries and direct you to further information.

Call: **0118 904 3467**

Email: PALS@berkshire.nhs.uk

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

Call: **0118 960 5140** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

Email: infection.control@berkshire.nhs.uk

Visit our website for more information about IPC.

 berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/ipc

