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You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

Please complete The Friends & Family Test to tell us about your experience at: www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily or download our App from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

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Date written: June 2007
Last revised: April 2017
Review date: April 2020
Version: 2.3
Code: P10685

Extended Spectrum Beta-Lactamase Producing Organisms (ESBL) *(page 1 of 2)*

What is ESBL?

- ESBL stands for Extended Spectrum Beta-Lactamase which is an enzyme produced by some bacteria. This enzyme breaks down certain types of antibiotics which means that ESBL producing bacteria are resistant to some of the antibiotics that would normally be used to treat infections. ESBL producing bacteria therefore make it more difficult to treat infections.
- ESBL producing bacteria are often responsible for infections in the waterworks (urinary tract) but may also cause infection in wounds and in the blood.
- Some of these bacteria normally live in your body, especially in the gut. They cause you no harm and you would feel quite well, with no signs or symptoms of infection. We call this colonisation.
- Patients in hospital are at greater risk of infection because the body's defences can be weakened by illness, drugs and surgery.

Can ESBL be treated?

- Even though ESBL producing bacteria are resistant to many antibiotics there are still treatments available.
- The doctors will decide with the Microbiologists on the most suitable treatment for you.
- Some patients will be nursed in a single room because of the site of the infection or their clinical condition to help manage the infection and reduce the risk to others.

How does ESBL spread?

- From person to person
- By hands or other objects that are contaminated by faeces. The bacteria are introduced into the mouth.
- If hands are not washed properly it can be spread on the hands of visitors, patients and healthcare workers after contact with an infected patient or equipment.

Good hand washing techniques and the use of alcohol hand gel is vital in preventing infection. This is true for staff members, visitors and relatives.

Infection Control Team

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Will the infection delay my discharge from hospital?

- No, not necessarily. You will stay in hospital until you are fit for discharge. We do not need to wait until you are clear of the ESBL producing bacteria.

Can those isolated receive visitors?

- Yes, however, visitors need to take particular care to avoid spreading infection and will be asked to wash their hands or use alcohol gel both when entering and leaving the ward.
- Visitors are requested not to sit on the beds.
- Visitors are asked to help by taking home dirty linen as soon as possible.

What happens when I go home?

- Even after successful treatment of acute symptoms you may still be colonised.
- This colonisation will not affect your normal lifestyle.
- Good personal hygiene is sufficient.
- Normal household cleaning is sufficient.
- You do not need to restrict your usual activities.

For further information

- Please speak to the nurses on the ward
- Ask to speak to a member of the Infection Prevention and Control Team.
- Look at the HPA website : www.hpa.org.uk.