

Multi-resistant Gram-negative bacteria (MRGNO)

Information for patients

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What are Multi-resistant Gram-negative bacteria?

Gram-negative bacteria are often found living naturally in the human gut. For many reasons a small number of these bacteria can become resistant to the antibiotics that they have been sensitive to in the past. This may mean that some of the traditional antibiotics are no longer effective for treating infections caused by these bacteria.

Multi-resistant Gram-negative bacteria is a term covering many different bacteria, including ESBL - producing E.coli and Klebsiella, some Acinetobacter and some Pseudomonas aeruginosa. It does not include MRSA.

How are they spread?

Gram-negative bacteria can be passed from person to person directly or indirectly via contamination of hands or objects and can then be introduced into the mouth, wounds or other entry sites into the body. They can also be acquired from another part of your own body. People who have been on antibiotics are more likely to acquire these bacteria.

Do they always cause infection?

No, people can often carry the bacteria without causing any harm (called colonisation) but sometimes it may lead to infection.

What infections do Multi-resistant Gram-negative bacteria cause?

Infections caused by Multi-resistant gram negative bacteria will often cause the same problems as those caused by other bacteria which can be treated with traditional antibiotics. The types of infections caused could be urine or wound infections, blood poisoning (septicaemia) or pneumonia. The resistant bacteria do not cause more dangerous infections than non-resistant bacteria, but they may be more difficult to treat.

How is it diagnosed?

Depending on symptoms a specimen of urine, blood, sputum or a wound swab is submitted by the doctor or nurse to the microbiology laboratory for testing.

Can it be treated?

People who are only colonised with the bacteria do not require antibiotic treatment. In most people these antibiotic resistant bacteria will disappear on their own over time. However, despite being resistant to many of the usual antibiotics, be reassured that treatment options are still available if an infection should occur. You may not have to stay in hospital until the infection is cleared up. You will be able to go home when your general condition allows regardless of whether you are still carrying the bacteria or not.

How can the spread to others be prevented?

People in hospital are more at risk of infections because their body defences are weakened by illness, surgery, medication and the presence of invasive devices like drips and urinary catheters. In hospital, patients with multi-resistant gram-negative bacteria may be placed into a single room.

Hospital staff involved in direct care will wear gloves and a plastic apron whilst in the room to reduce the risk of transferring bacteria to other patients. The prevention of spread of the bacteria relies mainly on everyone having good hand hygiene practices, particularly after using the toilet or caring for wounds or devices such as urinary catheters. The room will be cleaned daily and any equipment that is used on multiple patients will be cleaned after each use.

What about me and my visitors?

You should make sure that you wash your hands after using the toilet/commode/bedpan/urinal. Hand wipes are a useful alternative if you are unable to get to a hand wash basin. Wash hands or use hand wipes before eating or taking medication. All visitors should use the alcohol gel on entering and leaving your room.

Unless family and friends are involved with your personal care they will not have to put on aprons and gloves. Visitors should not sit on the bed and should not visit if they are unwell or have had diarrhoea or vomiting in the last 48 hours.

What happens when I go home?

The presence of the bacteria (which may disappear quite naturally) should not affect you or your family at home. Hand hygiene and household cleaning is sufficient and there are no restrictions to activities or visitors.

You can get further advice and information by:

- ✓ Asking your doctor or healthcare professional
- ✓ Asking to speak to a member of the Infection Prevention and Control Team

Other sources of information about health care:

Public Health England works with national and local government, industry and the NHS to protect and improve the nation's health and support healthier choices.

Website: www.gov.uk/phe

NHS Choices is the online front door to the NHS. It is the country's biggest health website and gives all the information you need to make choices about your health.

Website: www.nhs.uk

If you require this leaflet in any other format, eg. large print, please ask a member of staff