Multi-resistant gram-negative bacteria (MRGNB)

Information for patients

This leaflet is available in other formats including large print, audio tape, CD and braille, and in languages other than English, upon request from the Quality Assurance Lead, telephone: 01642 624115

This leaflet tells you about multi-resistant gram-negative bacteria, commonly called MRGNB.

What are multi-resistant bacteria?

Bacteria or germs are found on everyone, both inside and outside the body. Multi-resistant bacteria are germs that do not respond to some of the antibiotics commonly used to treat infection. They are often found living naturally in the digestive system (gut). 'Multi-resistant gram-negative bacteria' is a term covering many different bacteria but does not include MRSA. Some of these bacteria are also known as Extended-spectrum beta-lactamase (ESBL) producing bacteria.

Who could MRGNB affect?

These bacteria are most common in patients who have had a lot of antibiotics or have a low resistance to infection.

How can MRGNB affect me?

These bacteria can be found anywhere on or in your body without causing illness; this is called colonisation. Infections caused by these bacteria can cause the same symptoms as any other bacteria such as a urine or wound infection, blood poisoning (septicaemia) or pneumonia. Your doctor will decide if you need treatment.

How is it spread?

MRGNB are usually spread by direct contact, such as touch or contact with contaminated (infected) objects. They can also be spread from another part of your own body.

How can the spread of MRGNB be controlled?

Hospitals try to prevent the spread of MRGNB from patient to patient. This may be done by separating a patient with MRGNB from other patients. Careful washing and drying of hands, by both staff and visitors, or the use of hand gel, helps to reduce the spread of infection. Hospital staff involved in your care will wear gloves, a plastic apron and in some cases a face mask while in your room, to reduce the risk of spreading bacteria to other patients.
What about the environment?

The hospital domestic (cleaning) team work closely with ward staff to make sure our hospitals are as clean as possible. Your hospital room will be cleaned every day and equipment will be cleaned between each patient's use.

What will happen if I have MRGNB?

Being multi-resistant can make these bacteria harder to treat. If specimens such as urine, blood, sputum (phlegm) or a wound swab sent to the laboratory show you have MRGNB your doctor will decide which antibiotic is best to treat it, if needed.

If I have MRGNB will I be able to have visitors?

Yes. It is safe for healthy family members and friends to visit you. Physical contact such as touching, hugging and kissing is OK, but visitors must remember to wash their hands or use hand gel on entering and leaving your room and to put on an apron. Your visitors do not need to wear gloves unless they are helping you with personal care such as washing.

Will it affect my discharge from hospital?

No, as soon as you are well enough you can be discharged.

Will anything I use need special cleaning?

All household and personal items, for example, clothing, should be washed and cleaned as normal.

What happens when I go home?

The presence of the bacteria should not affect you or your family at home. Normal bathing or showering and household cleaning is all that is needed.
Contact numbers

If you have any questions or worries please talk to one of your doctors or nurses. They can arrange for you to speak with an infection prevention and control nurse.

University Hospital of North Tees

Infection Prevention and Control Department
telephone: 01642 383280
Monday - Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm

University Hospital of Hartlepool

Infection Prevention and Control Department
telephone: 01429 522311
Monday - Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm

Further information is available from:

NHS Direct 24 hour helpline 0845 4647
or via the website at www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Department of Health
Customer Service Centre
Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2NS
telephone: 0207 210 4850
or via the website at www.dh.gov.uk

Health Protection Agency
Centre for Infections
61 Colindale Avenue
London
NW9 5EQ
telephone: 0208 200 7868
e-mail: infections@hpa.org.uk
Information used in the development of this leaflet

Health Protection Agency (2005) "Investigations into multi-drug-resistant ESBL-producing Escherichia strains causing infections in England"
http://www.hpa.org.uk/Publications/InfectiousDiseases/AntimicrobialAndHealthcareAssociatedInfections/0511MultidrugresistantESBL

This leaflet has been produced in partnership with patients and carers. All patient leaflets are regularly reviewed, and any suggestions you have as to how it may be improved are extremely valuable. Please write to Quality Assurance Lead, University Hospital of North Tees, or telephone: 01642 624115 or email patientinformation@nth.nhs.uk.

Comments or complaints
We are continually trying to improve the services we provide. Please let us know about things we are doing well, or if you have any suggestions about how services can be improved.

Our Patient Advisory Liaison Service (PALS) is here to try to deal with any problems on the spot and give information about local services. If you would like to contact or request a copy of our PALS leaflet please contact:

University Hospital of North Tees
telephone: 01642 624719 or 0800 092 0084
University Hospital of Hartlepool
telephone: 01429 522874 or 0800 015 3031

If you are unhappy with any aspect of your care, please speak to any member of staff, PALS, the Patient Relations Department or write to the Chief Executive. If you would like a copy of our complaints leaflet please contact the Trust Patient Relations Department on:

telephone: 01642 624098

Data Protection and use of patient information
The Trust has developed a Data Protection Policy in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. All of our staff respect this policy, and confidentiality is adhered to at all times. If you require further information please contact the Head of Patient and Public Involvement.

telephone: 01642 624512 or www.dataprotection.gov.uk