

Patient information factsheet

Candidozyma (Candida) auris

We have given you this factsheet because you have tested positive for *Candidozyma auris* (*C. auris*). This factsheet explains what *C. auris* is, how it is treated, and how to prevent it from spreading during your stay in hospital and at home. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to a member of your healthcare team.

What is *C. auris*?

C. auris is a rare fungus that can lead to bloodstream, wound and ear infections.

Candida is a family of fungi (yeasts) that live on the skin and inside the human body. *C. auris* is much less common than other types of *candida* such as *Candida albicans* which can cause yeast infections (thrush). However, cases of *C. auris* are increasing worldwide. Some people can be carriers of *C. auris* without realising it, if they have no symptoms and do not become unwell as a result. This is called colonisation and this can sometimes lead to *C. auris* getting into surgical wounds or the bloodstream.

C. auris can enter the body during medical treatment (for example, operations or when urinary catheters or drips are inserted) and can cause serious or life-threatening infections that need treatment. *C. auris* has been seen in patients at a small number of hospitals in England.

How does *C. auris* spread?

We don't yet know exactly how *C. auris* spreads, but it appears to spread from person-to-person in hospitals via unwashed hands, having contact with contaminated equipment that has not been cleaned thoroughly, or picked up from the environment.

To prevent the spread of *C. auris* we are:

- testing patients for *C. auris* when they come into hospital if they have stayed overnight in another UK or abroad hospital or have come into contact with someone who has tested positive for *C. auris*. Some of our wards will then continue to test patients twice a week, with a further test before patients leave hospital. Our intensive care units will test patients weekly.
- isolating patients who are found to have *C. auris*, as well as any other patients who have been identified as high risk or have been in contact with someone who has *C. auris*.
- treating patients who are found to have *C. auris* with an antiseptic body wash and nasal gel.
- following enhanced hand hygiene procedures and enhanced cleaning of affected clinical areas.
- working closely with UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) regarding additional measures to limit the spread of *C. auris*.

You can help to prevent the spread by:

- washing your hands and using alcohol gel frequently (especially after using the toilet or returning to your bed area)
- not touching any areas of broken skin or wound dressings

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Having a test for C. auris

We use a cotton swab to take samples from the armpit and groin. This is not painful. We can then test this sample for traces of C. auris. You may have this test when you first come into hospital or later during your stay.

If you have C. auris

We will look after you in a single room or in a bay with other patients who also have C. auris. This is to help prevent C. auris spreading to other people. If you need to have any treatment for C. auris, your doctor will discuss this with you.

Visitors

Your family and friends can visit you in hospital, but we do not encourage children and babies to visit. People who are unwell themselves should not visit. If your visitor has had a recent infection or illness or has a medical problem which makes them vulnerable to infection, they should check with your doctor or nurse before visiting you.

Visitors should:

- use the alcohol hand gel provided before they enter your room and when they leave the ward
- wash their hands with soap and water before they leave your room or bay
- wear gloves and apron if they help with your personal care during their visit (they must then put their gloves and apron in an orange waste bin in the room and wash their hands with soap and water afterwards)

What happens after I go home?

- You won't need to have any special treatment when you go home. If you need to have any further medical care, please make sure you tell hospital staff or your healthcare team that you have had C. auris.
- Do not share face cloths and towels with others at home.
- We will tell your general practitioner (GP) that you have had C. auris when you leave hospital.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a nurse or another member of the team caring for you.

Useful links

www.gov.uk/government/collections/candida-auris

www.gov.uk/government/publications/candida-auris-laboratory-investigation-management-and-infection-prevention-and-control

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