

# Carbapenemase-Producing Organisms (CPO) -Fact Sheet

## **What is CPO?**

CPO is a type of bacteria that is resistant to many antibiotics. This means some medicines may not work to treat it. It usually lives in the bowel and may not cause harm. This is called colonization. Sometimes CPO can cause infections such as urinary tract infections, wound infections, and blood infections. These infections can be harder to treat.

## **How does CPO spread?**

CPO spreads by contact, not through the air. It can spread when hands touch a person who has CPO, hands touch surfaces or equipment with CPO on them and then touch the persons mouth, wounds, or medical devices CPO can live on surfaces like bed rails, toilets, doorknobs and medical equipment. Cleaning hands well helps stop the spread.

## **Understanding Isolation Precautions**

If you have CPO, you will be placed on Contact Precautions to protect others.

This means you will stay in a private room; staff will wear a gown and gloves, visitors must check in with the nurse first, and everyone must clean their hands when entering and leaving your room.

Isolation helps keep everyone safe.

## **How Does Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS) Test for CPO?**

A swab may be taken from your rectum, a wound or from your urine. The lab checks the sample for CPO. If tests are positive, each time you come to the hospital you will be placed on isolation until we can make sure you can't spread it. When it is safe, isolation will be stopped.

## **How Can You Help?**

You can help by:

- Regularly washing your hands
- Reminding your visitors to wash their hands and wear a gown and gloves when visiting
- Following staff instructions
- Patients may be asked to remain in their room to help prevent the spread of infection. If it is necessary to leave the room for tests or procedures, hand hygiene shall be performed. Family members and caregivers can help support these precautions to keep everyone safe.

## **Remember:**

Having CPO does not always mean you are sick.

We use extra precautions to prevent spreading and protect others.