

## ESBL and Amp C Information for Patients in Hospital

### What are ESBL and Amp Cs?

ESBL and Amp C are proteins (enzymes) produced by certain bugs (bacteria) which destroy antibiotics (e.g. penicillins and cephalosporins), rendering them useless. The proteins are called **E**xtended **S**pectrum **B**eta **L**actamase and Amp C beta lactamase.

### Where do these bugs come from?

ESBL and Amp C producing bugs are found in the faeces (stool) of some healthy people.

### How are they spread?

It is possible that these bugs are passed directly from person to person, via faecal contaminated hands and objects.

### Who is at risk of carrying ESBL and Amp C producing bugs?

- Elderly people, over 65 years old
- Very young, premature neonates
- People with long term urinary catheters
- People taking prolonged and extensive antibiotic therapy
- People being treated for cancer
- People who have undergone organ transplantation
- People who have undergone gastrointestinal surgery

### How are ESBL & Amp Cs Treated?

- The ESBL and Amp C producing bug may not be causing infection, since they can live harmlessly in the gut (bowel). In many instances antibiotic treatment is not required.

- If you have signs and symptoms of infection antibiotics may be indicated, your doctor will advise you on its use.
- Antibiotics treat infections, but do not necessarily eliminate the bug from the body.

### If I have ESBL or Amp C bug what can I do to prevent spreading it?

- The most important method of preventing spread is hand hygiene, with soap and warm water after you've been to the toilet and also before eating.
- It is equally very important that everyone cleans their hands after having contact with you or your immediate environment in hospital. Please feel free to ask staff to provide you with hand washing facilities when you need them and also prompt them or anyone else involved in your care to clean their own hands if you think they may have forgotten.
- Alcohol hand gel is very effective against ESBL and Amp C producing bugs.

### Whilst I'm in hospital will anything be different about my care?

- You may be moved into a single room and a sign may be placed on your room door to remind staff entering about the special precautions.
- Staff will wear gloves and aprons when giving you personal care and when dealing with urine and faeces to prevent spread to other patients.

## Will this affect my family and other visitors?

- Family and friends can still visit you, including children and pregnant women.
- It is not necessary for visitors to wear gloves and aprons.
- It is important that all your visitors use the alcohol hand gel on leaving your room or bed area.

If you have any questions that we have not answered in this leaflet, please ask your nurse or doctor caring for you on the ward or contact one of the infection control nurses on **(01392) 402355**.

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