EXTENDED-SPECTRUM BETA-LACTAMASE PRODUCING BACTERIA
Information for Patients and Visitors

What are extended-spectrum beta-lactamase (ESBL) producing bacteria?
• ESBLs are enzymes produced by bacteria, such as Klebsiella and Escherichia coli
• These enzymes make certain antibiotics ineffective
• The extended-spectrum (third generation) antibiotics affected can be Cefotaxime, Ceftazidime or Ceftriaxone.
• ESBL producing bacteria are often resistant to other drug classes

How are ESBLs Spread?
They can be passed directly from person to person on contaminated hands or indirectly on contaminated equipment used between patients.

Are certain people at risk of getting ESBLs?
• People most likely to get ESBLs are those who:
  • Are seriously ill
  • Are hospitalized for a long time
  • Have taken many antibiotics

What infections are commonly associated with ESBLs?
• Urinary tract infections
• Pneumonia
• Wound infections

Can we prevent the spread of ESBLs in hospitals?
• Prevention measures include:
  • Use of Routine Practices
  • Contact Precautions during the treatment of an ESBL infection
  • Wise use of antibiotics
  • Cleaning all environmental surfaces daily with a hospital disinfectant

Are there treatment options?
Yes, infections can be treated but there are fewer antibiotic choices.

What will happen when I leave the hospital?
• You do not need to take special precautions at home, other than practicing good hand hygiene
• ESBLs tend to be less of a problem outside the hospital
• Family members should also be educated about the importance of hand hygiene

Source: Provincial Infection Control (PIC-NL)
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