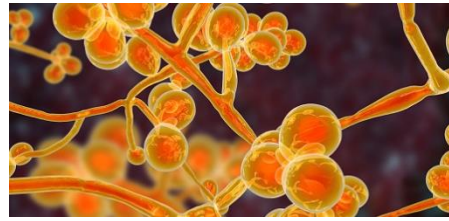


Candida auris

A drug-resistant germ that spreads in healthcare facilities



What is *Candida auris*?

The germ, *Candida auris*, or *C. auris* for short, is a fungus that can cause life-threatening infections in patients with serious medical problems in hospitals and nursing homes.

What is colonization?

Patients can become colonized with *C. auris*. Colonization means people carry *C. auris* on their bodies but don't have any illness symptoms. Colonization can last for many months and even years. About 1 in 10 patients with *C. auris* colonization go on to develop an infection with *C. auris*.

Why is *C. auris* a problem?

C. auris can spread quickly from person to person in healthcare facilities. *C. auris* can spread from healthcare workers' hands, healthcare equipment, and surfaces. *C. auris* is hard for laboratories to identify, is often resistant to many medications used for treatment, and requires special cleaning products. *C. auris* infections can be difficult to treat and even cause death. About 1 in 3 patients with invasive *C. auris* infection die.

Who is more likely to get *C. auris*?

C. auris mainly affects patients who have long-term, serious medical problems. People who have spent a lot of time in healthcare facilities are at the highest risk of becoming colonized or developing an infection with *C. auris*. Other factors that increase the risk of *C. auris* infection include:

- Being on a mechanical ventilator (breathing machine) for a long time.
- Having tubes going into the body, such as urinary catheters, central venous catheters, and feeding or breathing tubes.
- Recent treatment with antibiotic or antifungal medications.
- Recent stay at a long-term acute care hospital or skilled nursing facility that provides ventilator care.
- Recent stay at a healthcare facility in another country or in a part of the United States where *C. auris* is spreading.

How does *C. auris* spread to patients?

Patients with infection or colonization with *C. auris* can shed the germs in skin cells and in body fluids. *C. auris* can contaminate healthcare workers' hands, clothing, and other items in the healthcare environment – like doorknobs, bed rails, stethoscopes, blood pressure cuffs, and thermometers—and can quickly spread to other patients.

How can we prevent the spread of *C. auris*?

In order to prevent spread of *C. auris* in healthcare facilities, healthcare workers should:

- Know how germs spread and make sure they do not carry them to other patients on their clothing, hands, or equipment.
- Wash or sanitize hands before and after caring for patients or touching items in the patient’s room.
- Use the right personal protective equipment when caring for patients who can spread infections – often this includes gowns and gloves.
- Use effective cleaning products for disinfecting areas that might have *C. auris* germs on them. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) lists disinfectants that are effective against *C. auris* (see [EPA List P](#)).
- Clean and disinfect equipment before and after use on a patient.

In order to prevent spread of *C. auris* in the home:

- Clean hands with soap and warm water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer before eating or preparing food, after using the toilet, after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, and before and after changing wound dressings or bandages. This is good advice for everyone.
- Make sure your caregivers clean their hands before and after they care for you including after contact with wounds, helping you use the bathroom, after cleaning up stool, and before and after handling medical devices (e.g., urinary catheters). Gloves should be used for possible contact with body fluids or blood. Always clean hands after removing gloves.

Who Should Be Tested for *C. auris*?

Public Health recommends testing patients for *C. auris* if they may have been exposed to another person with *C. auris* infection or colonization. The testing is to see if they have the *C. auris* germ on their body.

Should healthcare workers and family members be tested to see if they have *C. auris*?

Public Health does not recommend testing healthy family members or healthcare workers who care for patients with *C. auris*. In general, healthy people are not at risk from *C. auris* and do not need to be tested.



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