Fact Sheet for Patients and Families

Candida auris (C. auris)

What is *C. auris*?

Candida auris [kan-DI-duh AW-ris], also called *Candidozyma auris* or *C. auris*, is a fungus that can live on the skin and inside the human body. *C. auris* can cause serious infections in the bloodstream, the ear, wounds and more.



How is *C. auris* Spread?

C. auris can pass from one person to another in hospitals and long-term care facilities like nursing homes.

Some patients might not become sick but can be infected with *C. auris* or have the fungus on their body. This is called colonization. Whether a person is infected or colonized, *C. auris* can spread to other people or things nearby.

Who is Most Likely to Get *C. auris*?

Healthy people usually do not get *C. auris* Those most at risk are people with more extended hospital stays or in long-term care facilities, especially those who have:

- Many medical problems.
- A weakened immune system from conditions like blood cancer or diabetes.
- Taken a lot of antibiotics.
- Long-term indwelling medical devices such as breathing tubes, urinary catheters, feeding tubes or dialysis catheters.

Anyone who received inpatient (overnight) medical care or underwent an invasive medical procedure outside the U.S. is also at higher risk of getting *C. auris*.

How is *C. auris* Treated?

C. auris infections are often treated with antifungal medications called echinocandins [ek-un-noh-KAN-dinz]. Other types of antifungal medicines may also be used.

Some *C. auris* infections do not respond to any of the main classes of antifungal medicines. In such cases, more than one antifungal drug or higher doses of these drugs may be used.

It is not recommend to treat *C. auris* for any patient without signs or symptoms of infection. This includes both patients with *C. auris* colonization and patients with *C. auris* detected in noninvasive sites (i.e., respiratory tract or urine).



If you are diagnosed with *C. auris*

While in a Healthcare Facility

Your care team will take special precautions to prevent the fungus from spreading to other patients. For example:

- You will be placed in a private room. If a private room isn't available, you may share a room with someone who has a similar condition.
- Your caregivers will wear gloves and a protective gown when in your room.
- Visitors will be asked to wash their hands before entering and after leaving your room. They should be careful to not touch anything you touch, your bandages or medical equipment.

It's important for you to take prescribed medications as instructed and finish the entire course, even if you feel better before you run out.

When It's Time for You to Leave the Healthcare Facility

- You may leave when your doctor says you are ready, even if you have *C. auris*.
- If you are going to another hospital or care facility, a care team member will inform them of your positive *C. auris* result so steps can be taken to prevent the spread to other patients.

After Going Home

- Your clothes, bed linens and dishes may be washed as usual.
- Continue to follow instructions from your healthcare provider.
- Do not allow pets to touch or lick any open wounds or incisions you may have.
- In the future, if you seek care at a hospital, nursing home, wound clinic or dialysis clinic, notify the staff of your *C. auris* history.

Stop *C. auis* from Spreading

Keep Your Hands Clean

Regular hand hygiene is one of the best ways to protect yourself and others from getting sick. You can use soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer if your hands are not visibly soiled.



Always wash your hands:

- Before preparing or eating food.
- After using the bathroom.
- After coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
- After contact with wound drainage or other bodily fluids.
- After changing your bandages.

Caregivers should clean their hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after touching someone with *C. auris* or equipment in their room. Wearing medical gloves is not a substitute for practicing proper hand hygiene.

For more information, visit hhs.iowa.gov/hai-prevention

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