

Candida auris



WHAT IS IT?

Candida auris, a type of yeast infection, is emerging as a global public health concern as a cause of healthcare-associated infections. CDC has identified it as an urgent threat due to recent rising cases and although still considered rare, it has been reported in 30 countries in the last 20 years. Long-term residents with medical lines or tubes entering their body, or who have received antibiotics or antifungal medications, appear to be at highest risk. It is likely that cases are underreported due to the lack of available diagnostic methods and resemblance to other *Candida* species.

WHY SHOULD I CARE?

- Infections can be difficult to treat since they are often resistant to the common antifungal drugs used to treat infections.
- It can be invasive spreading to multiple organs through the bloodstream and can be fatal in as many as 1/3 of cases.
- It can be challenging to identify, so may lead to inappropriate case management.
- It can be spread through contact with contaminated surfaces and fomites shed from infected or colonized patients
- Surface survival has been reported for days to weeks, and it can persist in biofilms.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

The most common symptoms are fever and chills that don't improve after antibiotic treatment for a suspected bacterial infection.



WHAT DO I DO ABOUT IT?

Following infection control procedures in healthcare settings is vital. These include:

1. Handwashing of soiled hands with soap and water and use of alcohol-based antiseptics when appropriate.
2. Contact precautions including the use of gloves and gowns and proper donning and doffing.
3. Disinfection of patients' rooms and other areas at least daily with a product effective against *Candida* species.
4. Research has shown that chlorhexidine gluconate, iodinated povidone, chlorine, and hydrogen peroxide vapor demonstrate effective killing activity against *C. auris* at concentrations used in clinical practice in in vitro studies. The US EPA has a list of antimicrobial products with claims against *Candida auris*. It is important that such products are used according to their labeled directions, including the correct contact time.

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