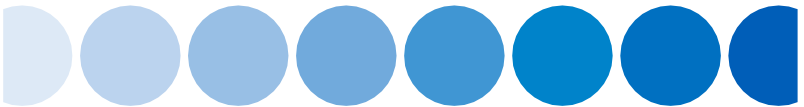


*Infection Control*

**E.Coli**

*Patient Information Leaflet*



# How can E.coli infections be prevented?

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E.coli infections cannot always be completely prevented; however, you can reduce the risk of getting an infection by:

- Washing your hands after using the toilet
- Washing your hands before preparing and eating food
- Washing your hands before touching a catheter or changing the bag
- Not touching catheters intravenous lines or open wounds unnecessarily
- Women should wipe front to back after going to the toilet
- Keep hydrated. Drink plenty of fluid each day.

## What is E.coli?

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Escherichia Coli (E.coli) is a type of bacteria common in human intestines and forms part of the normal gut flora (The bacteria that exist in the bowel). There are a number of different types of E.coli and although some are harmless some can cause serious infections.

## How is E.coli spread?

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E.coli is excreted from the body in faeces. If you do not wash your hands properly after going to the toilet the bacteria can spread around the house and across your body via hands.

If the bacteria enters your body through, for example a wound or catheter, passages it could cause infection.

## Who is at risk?

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Anyone can pick up an E.coli infection, however, you are more at risk of E.coli infection if you:

- Are an older person
- Have diabetes
- Become dehydrated
- Have a urinary catheter
- Have an intravenous device (PICC or Hickman line – you'll know what these are if you have one)
- Have gallbladder or kidney stones
- Have an enlarged prostate or other prostate problems.

## What are the signs and symptoms of E.coli infections?

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Symptoms of an E.coli infection can be different depending on where the infection is. If the E.coli has entered your blood and caused a blood stream infection (bacteraemia) some of the main symptoms are: a very high temperature, shivers and chills, not passing urine all day, being more confused than usual and your symptoms not getting better or getting worse within two days of starting antibiotics. Bacteraemia can only be diagnosed through blood tests.

## How is E.coli treated?

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If your doctor or nurse thinks you may have an E.coli infection they will take a sample from the infection area (e.g urine sample, wound swab). You may be then prescribed antibiotics to treat the infection.

## How is E.coli treated?

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E.coli lives quite normally in your bowl so it is impossible to get rid of it completely, however, if E.coli spreads to another area and infects it, you may need antibiotics to treat it. Having an E.coli infection does not give you immunity, so if it gets into an area where it should not be again, you may need more treatment.

## Unsure of anything?

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Thank you for taking the time to read this leaflet. Please ask our staff if you are unsure of anything, or need anything explaining. They will be happy to discuss any aspect of your hospital stay or visit.

For further information contact: Infection Prevention and Control Team **01226 432825**.

### **References:**

The Health and Social Care Act 2008, Code of practice for health and adult social care on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance. Department of Health updated 2015.

Dougherty L, Lister S (2015) The Royal Marsden Hospital Manual of Clinical Nursing Procedures. 9th edition, Wiley Blackwell Oxford.

If you need this information in an alternative format, please contact the Patient Advice and Complaints Team on 01226 432330.

Если Вы хотели бы эту информацию на другом языке или другом формате, типа большой печати, пожалуйста звоните 01226 432330

Jeśli potrzebujesz te informacje w innym języku czy w innej postaci, na przykład dużym drukiem, proszę dzwonić na numer 01226 432330

如果您想索取這些資料的中文譯本或以其他形式編制的版本（如大字體），請 致電01226 432330

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