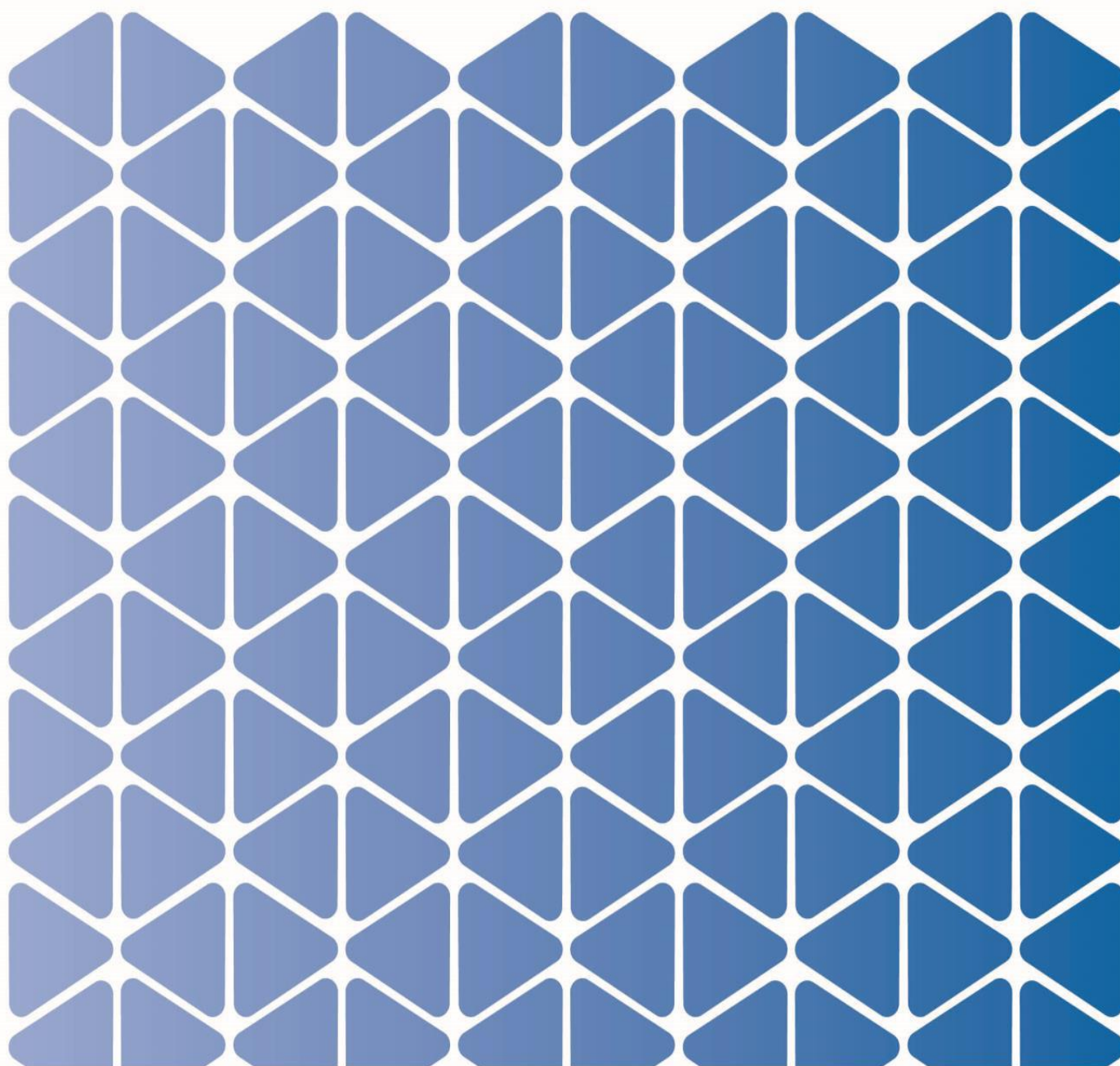


PATIENT INFORMATION**CANDIDOZYMA/CANDIDA AURIS (C. AURIS)
- A GUIDE FOR PATIENTS AND VISITORS**

Candidozyma/Candida auris (C. auris)- a guide for patients and visitors

Candidozyma/Candida auris (C. auris) is an uncommon fungus which has been seen in patients at a small number of hospitals in England. In some cases, patients may have no symptoms, but it can lead to bloodstream, wound and ear infections. This guide aims to provide key information on the fungus, how patients are tested, steps in place to help prevent the spread of C. auris, its treatment, and information for hospital visitors.

What is Candidozyma auris?

Candidozyma auris is a fungus (yeast) that live on the skin and inside the human body. C. auris is much less common than other types of fungi Candida such as Candida albicans which can cause yeast infections (thrush).

Some people can be carriers of C. auris without realising it, as they have no symptoms and do not become unwell as a result. However, C. auris can cause problems in hospitals. C. auris can occasionally get into surgical wounds or the bloodstream and enter the body during medical treatment including operations or when urinary catheters or drips are inserted. Infections are usually minor but can become more serious, although serious infections are rare.

Do I need to be concerned?

We would like to reassure you that United Kingdom Health Security Agency UKHSA is working with NHS Trusts to monitor the situation closely and further understanding of C. auris. Hospitals are working hard to report new cases or outbreaks, are undertaking testing for C. auris, and are putting in place measures to help control any spread of C. auris.

UKHSA is also ensuring that NHS Trusts and other healthcare providers and experts nationwide are kept fully informed. We will provide further expert advice as needed.

How are patients tested for C. auris?

A healthcare professional will take swabs from different parts of a patient's body: nose, axilla (arm pit) groin, urine and wounds to test for C. auris. This may happen on admission to hospital (if the patient is coming from abroad) or during a patient's stay (if patient is identified as a contact of a known positive case) in hospital.

What will happen if I have a C. auris infection?

Potential symptoms include pus at a wound or increases in temperature and feeling generally unwell if a drip line or urinary catheter is infected. Inpatients diagnosed with a C. auris infection will usually be cared for in a single room to help prevent any spread

of *C. auris*. Patients with a *C. auris* infection will usually be treated with antifungal medicines.

What steps are in place to help prevent the spread of *C. auris*?

UKHSA is working closely with affected hospitals to advise on additional infection control measures to limit the spread of *C. auris*. Measures include screening (taking samples from the body: nose, axilla (arm pit) groin, urine and wounds) and isolating infected patients, enhanced hand hygiene procedures, and enhanced cleaning of affected clinical areas.

How is *C. auris* spread?

Exactly how *C. auris* is spread is still being investigated but it appears to be transmitted from person-to-person in hospitals. This is most likely due to several factors; *C. auris* is difficult to clear completely from the environment and it is easy to pick up on clothes, equipment, and hands.

The spread of infection can be limited by washing hands and using alcohol gel before and after touching patients or any items around the bedside. Visitors may be asked to wear a gown, plastic aprons and gloves.

Can I do anything to help prevent the spread of *C. auris*?

Where possible, patients should avoid touching any areas of broken skin or wound dressings and ensure they wash their hands regularly, particularly after using the toilet and before eating food.

Healthy people do not usually become infected with *C. auris*. However, visitors should wash their hands and use alcohol hand gel before and after touching patients or any items around the bedside. Visitors may also be asked to wear a gown, plastic aprons and gloves.

What happens after I go home?

Patients diagnosed with a *C. auris* infection will be treated with antifungal agents before being discharged. No special treatment is required for patients found to be carrying *C. auris*. However, patients who know they are, or have been, a carrier should inform hospital staff on re-admission.

Links to further information:

More information can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/candida-auris-laboratory-investigation-management-and-infection-prevention-and-control>

If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that you may need to leave a voicemail message, but we aim to return your call within one working day.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.