

JOHNS HOPKINS HOSPITAL

Patient – Visitor Information Sheet

MDR-*ACINETOBACTER*

What is *Acinetobacter*?

Acinetobacter is a type of bacteria that can be found in many sources in the environment, including water and soil. Some strains of *Acinetobacter* can cause infections.

What can *Acinetobacter* cause?

Sometimes *Acinetobacter* causes skin or wound infections. In patients who are ill, it can cause lung infection (pneumonia) or infection in the blood.

How is *Acinetobacter* treated?

Many strains of *Acinetobacter* are easily treated with common antibiotics. Some strains of *Acinetobacter* are resistant to common antibiotics and this is called multidrug-resistant or MDR-*Acinetobacter*. Infections with MDR *Acinetobacter* are more difficult to treat.

Not all patients with MDR-*Acinetobacter* need antibiotics. Sometimes the bacteria live on skin or in wounds without causing an infection.

Are there any side effects to treatment of *Acinetobacter*?

Antibiotics used to treat these infections do have potential side effects including stomach upset, diarrhea, and rash among others. When stronger antibiotics need to be used, more serious side effects such as hearing loss and reduced kidney or liver function can occur.

How do I know if there is an infection?

Fever, redness around the wound, increasing pain, and thick, foul smelling pus from wounds are all sign of infection. If you have any of these signs or symptoms, please contact your doctor for evaluation.

Who is at risk of infection?

The people most likely to be infected are those who are already ill and who have been admitted to the hospital. Patients who have compromised immune systems, such as those with HIV/AIDS, transplant patients, etc., are at risk for this and other infections.

What will this mean for my hospital care?

All patients who have a positive culture for Multidrug resistant (MDR) Acinetobacter will be placed on isolation precautions. Isolation precautions are used to prevent the spread of MDR-Acinetobacter among patients. Hospital staff will wear gowns and gloves to care for you. A cart will be placed outside the room to hold supplies. A card will be placed on the door to alert everyone what precautions are needed to enter the room. Visitors should report to the nurses' station for directions on what to do to enter your room. All of these steps are to keep germs from spreading.

What will happen when I go home?

At home, in most cases, you need only to use good hand hygiene. The nursing staff will give you discharge instructions.

*****Acinetobacter* does not usually pose a threat to healthy people, hospital staff or to family members or close contacts of an infected patient.**

Please ask to see other Patient & Visitor information sheets such as "Infection Control While in Isolation" and "Infection Control While in the Hospital". These are also located on our website www.hopkins-heic.org under Patient & Visitor Information.