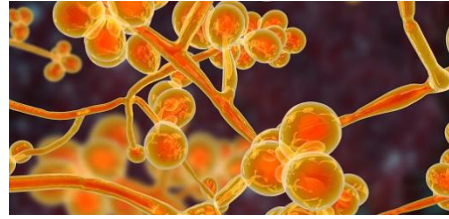


# Candida auris

A drug-resistant germ that spreads in healthcare facilities



## What is *Candida auris*?

The germ, *Candida auris*, or *C. auris* for short, is a fungus that can cause life-threatening infections in patients with serious medical problems in hospitals and nursing homes.

## What is colonization?

Patients can become colonized with *C. auris*. Colonization means people carry *C. auris* on their bodies but don't have any illness symptoms. Colonization can last for many months and even years. About 1 in 10 patients with *C. auris* colonization go on to develop an infection with *C. auris*.

## Why is *C. auris* a problem?

*C. auris* can spread quickly from person to person in healthcare facilities. *C. auris* can spread from healthcare workers hands, healthcare equipment, and surfaces. *C. auris* is hard for laboratories to identify, is often resistant to many medications used for treatment, and requires special cleaning products. *C. auris* infections can be difficult to treat and even cause death. About 1 in 3 patients with invasive *C. auris* infection die.

## Who is more likely to get *C. auris*?

*C. auris* mainly affects patients who have long-term, serious medical problems. People who have spent a lot of time in healthcare facilities are at the highest risk of becoming colonized or developing an infection with *C. auris*. Other things that increase the risk of *C. auris* infection include:

- Being on a mechanical ventilator (breathing machine) for a long time.
- Having tubes going into the body, such as urinary catheters, central venous catheters, and feeding or breathing tubes.
- Recent treatment with antibiotic or antifungal medications.
- Recent stay at a long-term acute care hospital or skilled nursing facility that provides ventilator care.
- Recent stay at a healthcare facility in another country or in a part of the United States where *C. auris* is spreading.

In general, healthy people, including healthcare workers and family members, do not get *C. auris* colonization or infection.

## How does *C. auris* spread to patients?

Patients with infection or colonization with *C. auris* can shed the germs in skin cells and in body fluids. *C. auris* can contaminate healthcare workers hands, clothing, and other items in the healthcare environment – like doorknobs, bed rails, stethoscopes, blood pressure cuffs, and thermometers—and can quickly spread to other patients.

## How can we prevent the spread of *C. auris* in healthcare facilities?

In order to prevent spread of *C. auris* in healthcare facilities, healthcare workers should:

- Know how germs spread and make sure they do not carry them to other patients on their clothing, hands, or equipment.
- Wash or sanitize hands before and after caring for patients or touching items in the patient's room.
- Use the right personal protective equipment when caring for patients who can spread infections – often this includes gowns and gloves.
- Use special cleaning products for disinfecting areas that might have *C. auris* germs on them. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) lists disinfectants that are effective against *C. auris* (see [EPA List P](#)).
- Clean and disinfect equipment before and after use on a patient.

## Who Should Be Tested for *C. auris*?

Public Health recommends testing patients for *C. auris* if they may have been exposed to another person with *C. auris* infection or colonization. The testing is to see if they have the *C. auris* germ on their body.

## Should healthcare workers and family members be tested to see if they have *C. auris*?

Public Health does not recommend testing healthy family members or healthcare workers who care for patients with *C. auris*. In general, healthy people are not at risk from *C. auris* and do not need to be tested.



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