

Having a screening test for germs/ viruses

Infection Prevention

Information for Patients & Carers

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Why are patients screened for germs?

Patient safety is very important to us at Leicester's hospitals. A screening test is a way of finding out if people have certain germs (bacteria and viruses) when they come to hospital. This test allows us to take extra steps to try to stop the spread of these germs, and give you the right treatment if needed.

Germs are present almost everywhere; in the air, on hard surfaces, and our bodies - including our skin and in our gut without ever making us ill. If these germs get into places that they do not usually live e.g. a wound, urinary tract, phlegm (sputum), they can cause infections.

What to expect

If you are having planned treatment you may be screened before you come into hospital (e.g. in the Pre-operative Assessment Clinic) or possibly by your GP. If you come to the hospital as an emergency, you may be screened once you are on the ward. We may look after you in a single room (isolation) or a bay during this screening process.

During your hospital stay we may ask to screen you for several different germs. The number of screening tests will depend on many factors including:

- where you are being admitted to within the hospital.
- if you are undergoing elective surgery.
- if you have been transferred from another hospital.
- If you have previously had a known germ such as methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) or multi-drug resistant (MDR) germs.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

- if you have had a stay in any hospital including one of Leicester's hospitals within the last 12 months.
- if you have had a stay in a hospital abroad within the last 12 months.

Which germs/ viruses will I be screened for?

You may be screened for:

Germ / Virus	Where swab is taken	Hospital location
COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nose • Throat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All patients on admission to any area. • All areas if you have symptoms including a cough, runny nose, fever. • Routine screening in all areas on days 3, 5, 7 and 13, and then weekly during hospital stay.
Influenza / Respiratory viruses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nose • Throat 	All areas if you have symptoms including a cough, runny nose, fever.
MRSA (methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nose • Skin between your genitals and back passage (perineum). • Any wounds/ skin lesions. • Mucus or phlegm (sputum) if present when you cough. • Urine (if you have a catheter inserted). • Any devices that go into your body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgical pre-assessment clinics. • All high risk inpatient areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adult/ Children's critical care areas - Adult/ Children's cardiology and cardiac surgery - Adult/ Children's cancer patients before starting chemotherapy - All adult surgical wards - Children's respiratory ward - Trauma orthopaedics - Gastroenterology - Gynaecology - Kidney and transplant

Germ / Virus	Where swab is taken	Hospital location
MSSA (methicillin-sensitive Staphylococcus aureus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nose • Skin between your genitals and back passage (perineum). • Any wounds/ skin lesions. • Mucus or phlegm (sputum) if present when you cough. • Urine (if you have a catheter inserted). • Any devices that go into your body. 	Kidney dialysis patients and some patients that have a plastic tube (cannula) going into a major vein (central line).
MDR (multi-drug resistant organisms)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back passage (rectum). • Any wounds/ skin lesions. • Mucus or phlegm (sputum) if present when you cough. • Urine (if you have a catheter inserted). • Any devices that go into your body. 	Screened on admission in all areas if you have previously tested positive for known MDR germs, and weekly thereafter depending on risk factors.
CRO (carbapenem-resistant organisms)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back passage (rectum). 	All areas if you have previously stayed in any hospital in the UK including one of Leicester's hospitals, or a hospital abroad, within the last 12 months. Or as part of enhanced screening.

How will a swab be taken?

A swab (similar to an absorbent cotton bud) is rubbed around the area to be tested. The procedure is usually painless and only takes a few seconds.

What happens next?

Results from your swabs usually take between 2 and 3 days. During this time you may be cared for in a single room until the result of your test is known; this is to prevent any possible infections spreading to other patients.

If you have a positive result, we will tell you what germ has been found and what extra steps will need to be taken. If your swab was collected as an outpatient and it is positive, you will get a letter from the Infection Prevention Team informing you of the result along with the appropriate information leaflet.

For most people, having these germs will not cause any problems. However, knowing that you have them is important to help us choose an antibiotic treatment for you (if required), and to prevent the spread to other patients.

If you have a negative result, this means that you are not carrying the germ that you were screened for and no treatment or extra care is needed. If you are in a single room, you may be moved back to the main ward area.

Depending on your length of stay, you may need to be screened again.

Preventing the spread of infection at Leicester's Hospitals

To reduce the risk of healthcare associated infections across our hospitals we have a dedicated Infection Prevention Team (0116 258 5448) and policies which are evidence based and regularly reviewed. We closely monitor infection rates across our hospitals and any risks and trends are reported to our Infection Prevention Assurance Committee, our Board of Directors and Public Health England.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk