

Candida auris Information for Families and Residents

What is *Candida auris*?

Candida auris (also called *C. auris*) is a **germ that infects people who are already sick with another serious illness, or elderly patients in nursing homes**. It can also live on the skin, in the nose, or inside the body without making a person sick. Infections with this germ can be difficult to treat, and it can spread from person to person in hospitals and nursing homes.

How does *C. auris* spread?

C. auris can spread from **person to person** or from **a person touching a surface that has been contaminated**. *C. auris* can stay alive on surfaces for over a month. Cleaning surfaces that are frequently touched with products designed to kill *C. auris* is important to stopping the spread of this germ.

Why is it important for me/my family member to be tested for this germ if living in a nursing home?

The hospital or nursing home where you or your family member is staying is testing patients for *C. auris* as part of their work **to stop this germ from spreading to other people**. Even patients who are not sick will be tested to see if they have the germ. Your doctors will be able to make better choices for you about your medical care if they know whether you carry this germ. Some people can carry this germ on their skin, and they can spread the germ to others without knowing it.

How can I/my family member be tested for this germ?

People can carry this kind of germ on their skin, so **the best way to test for this germ is for a health care professional to check your armpit and groin**, the area where your leg joins your body. This will be done by using a swab (like a Qtip) to gently rub your armpits and groin. The testing is not painful and there are no side effects. Multiple lab tests will be performed on the swabs. The final results should be available in a few weeks. There will be no charge to you for this testing.

What does it mean if I/my family member is positive for this germ?

If your test results are positive, it means **you are carrying the germ on your body but are not sick from it**. Many people who carry the germ never get sick from it. **If the germ is not making you sick, you will not need any treatment**. **If you do get sick, it will help your doctor to know you carry this germ when making treatment choices**. Your nurses and doctors will take extra steps to make sure the germ does not spread to other patients by placing you in a private room or by choosing your roommates carefully and by wearing a gown and gloves when caring for you.



How long will I/my family member have this germ?

As of now there is no way to stop this germ from living on your body. This means that **while you may never get sick from having this germ, you will likely carry it on your body forever.** People who test positive for this germ can test negative at a later date, but this does not mean that the germ is gone. Because of this germ's ability to hide, repeat testing is not recommended.

Should family members or other close contacts of patients be tested for *C. auris*?

Usually **CDC does not recommend that family members or other close contacts of patients with *C. auris* infections be tested for *C. auris*.**

However, if someone who is a close contact of a patient with *C. auris* is admitted to a healthcare facility, a healthcare provider might test them for *C. auris* to determine if special precautions should be used.

Can family members of someone who has *C. auris* get sick?

Family members who are healthy probably have a low chance of *C. auris* infection. *C. auris* is more of a problem among people who are already sick with multiple conditions and have spent a lot of time in healthcare settings.

Family members and others caring for patients with *C. auris* should **wash their hands** thoroughly before and after touching a positive patient or touching medical devices. Handwashing is very important if someone is caring for more than one ill person at home. Be sure to ask and remind healthcare personnel to wash their hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.



Do family members need to take any action to prevent the spread of *C. auris*?

Patients and family members should **clean their hands** thoroughly before and after touching each other or the area around the patient, particularly when leaving a patient's room.

What should people who have tested positive for *C. auris* do after leaving healthcare facilities?

People who have tested positive for *C. auris* should **inform healthcare providers** when visiting healthcare offices and when being admitted to hospitals and nursing homes.

Although the risk of *C. auris* infection in otherwise healthy people is low, patients and their family members should continue practicing **good hand washing** when returning home. If family members are caring for patients with *C. auris*, they should think about wearing disposable gloves when providing certain types of care like changing the bandage on wounds and helping the patient take a bath.



For more information visit
www.cdc.gov/fungal/candida-auris



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