

Multidrug-Resistant Organism (MDRO) Laboratory Surveillance: Best Practices for Healthcare Facilities

Healthcare-Associated Infections Program
Presented via webinar
August 5, 2025

Webinar reminders



This session is being recorded.



The slides will be distributed following the webinar.



Please stay muted.



Type questions or comments in the Q&A box. We will try to answer live. Any questions not covered will be included in a follow-up Q&A document.



Objectives

- Understand the goals of MDRO laboratory surveillance
- Describe how to read an antimicrobial susceptibility testing (AST) report
- Describe clinical isolate surveillance for priority MDROs
- Understand when to submit clinical isolates to public health for testing



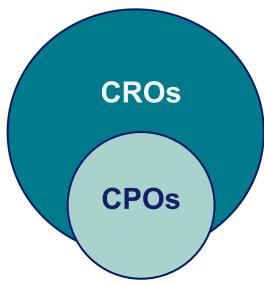
Quick review of priority MDROs

What are priority MDROs?

- Candida auris (C. auris) and carbapenemaseproducing organisms (CPOs)
 - Cause substantial morbidity and mortality
 - Can spread rapidly within and among healthcare facilities
 - Can be contained through early and aggressive facility and public health efforts



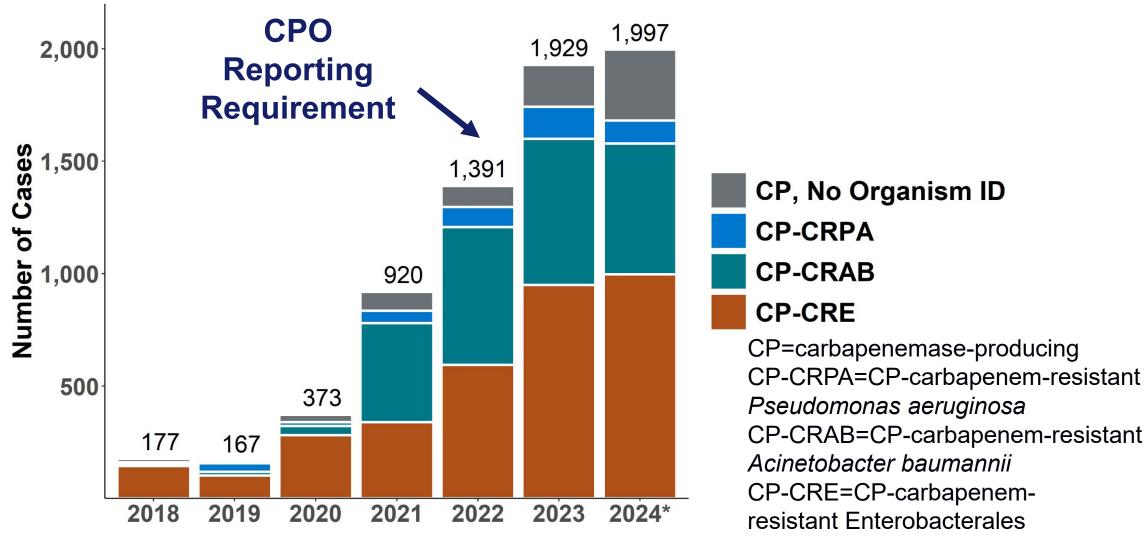
Candida auris (C. auris)



CROs=carbapenem-resistant organisms CPOs=carbapenmase-producing Enterobacterales, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and *Acinetobacter baumannii*₅

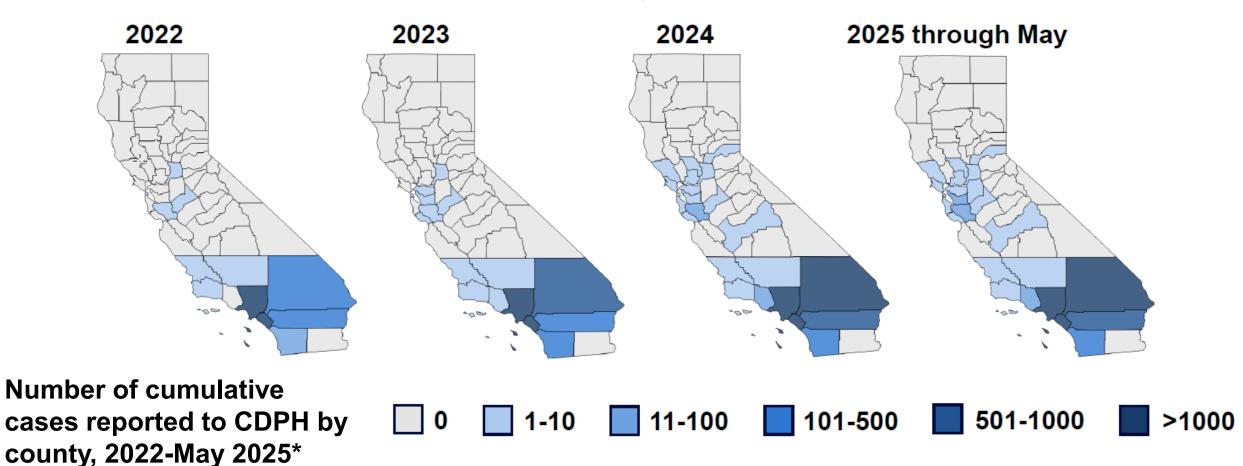


CPO cases continue to increase





C. auris cases are increasing and spreading across California each year





Most states have identified C. auris¹

C. auris clinical cases reported to CDC, 2016-2023

No new clinical cases

11 to 50

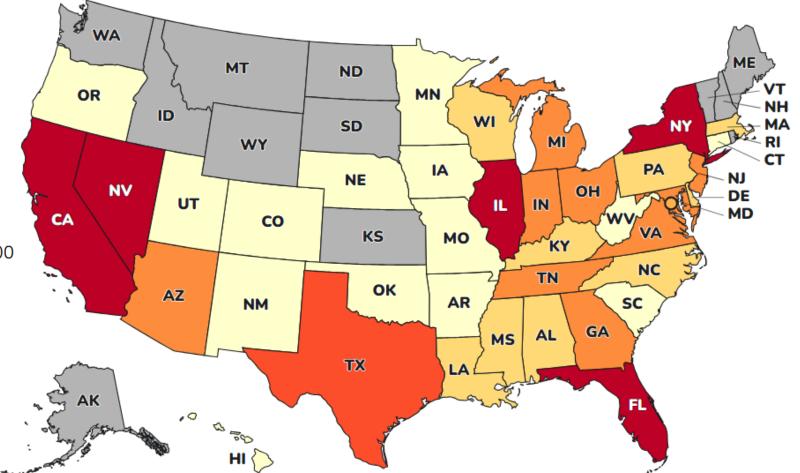
101 to 500

>1000

1 to 10

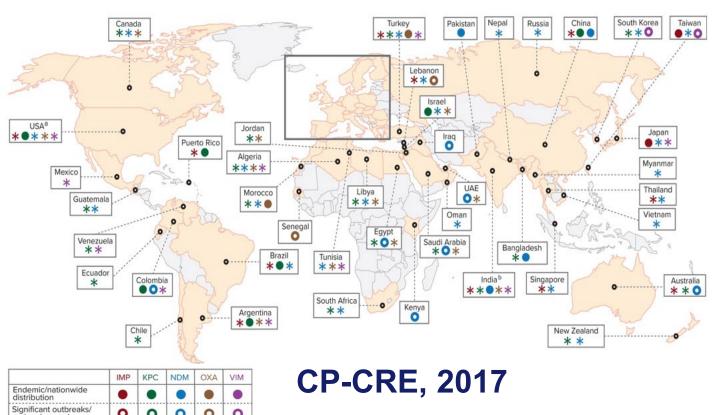
51 to 100

501 to 1000

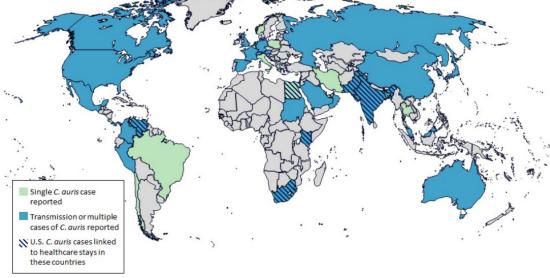




Many countries are reporting *C. auris* and CPO cases, outbreaks and endemicity^{2,3}



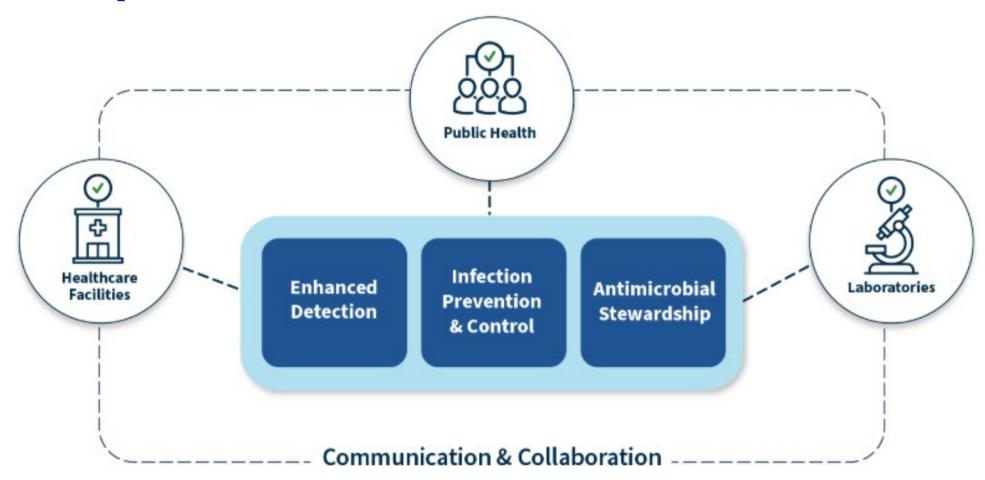
C. auris, 2021





Sporadic outbreak

MDRO prevention and containment

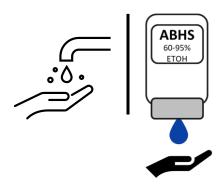




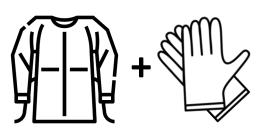
Infection prevention & control⁴

Core IPC practices can prevent the spread of MDROs

Hand Hygiene



Personal Protective Equipment



+ observe and monitor compliance

Environmental Cleaning & Disinfection





Antimicrobial stewardship

Promoting antimicrobial stewardship is critical for addressing antimicrobial resistance upstream



Antimicrobial Awareness webpage

(www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/AAResources.aspx)

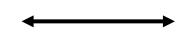


Communication & collaboration

- When transferring patients with priority MDROs to another healthcare facility, communicate the patients' status to the receiving facility at time of transfer.
- When receiving transferred patients, facilities should actively seek information on MDRO status.

- CDPH HAI provides an interfacility transfer form
 - CDPH Interfacility Transfer
 Communications
 (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/InterfacilityCommunication.aspx)

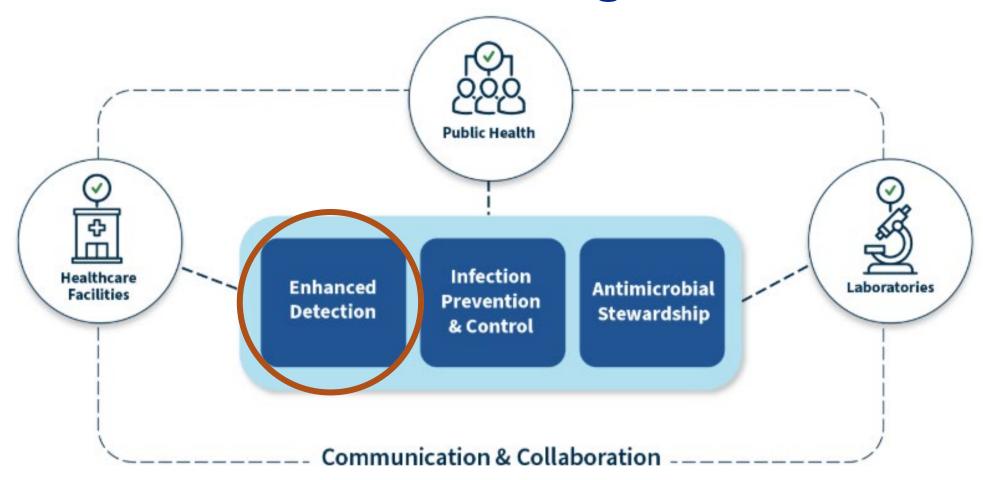








Enhanced detection through lab surveillance





Additional Resources

Introduction to Priority Multidrug-resistant Organisms (MDROs) Webinar Recording (www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CMFt7TUH4Y) and Webinar Slides (PDF) (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/CD PH%20Document%20Library/IntroToPriority MDROs_022025.pdf)



Priority MDRO laboratory surveillance

How can facilities improve their awareness of MDROs?

Priority MDRO lab surveillance recommendations for healthcare facilities



Admission and response screening

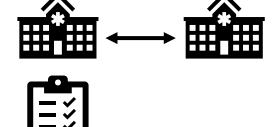
Proactive point prevalence surveys for long-term acute care hospitals (LTACHs) and ventilator-equipped skilled nursing facilities (vSNFs)



Clinical isolate surveillance



Interfacility transfer communication



Tracking patients with priority MDROs



Admission screening



CDPH HAI provides recommendations for screening high-risk patients on admission for *C. auris* and CPOs by facility type



Priority MDRO admission screening recommendations by facility type: LTACHs and vSNF ventilator units



Screen all patients on admission



Conduct routine point prevalence surveys (PPSs) per public health guidance



Priority MDRO admission screening recommendations by facility type: acute care hospitals

Screening recommended

For patients transferring from:

- LTACH or vSNF ventilator unit
- facility with known transmission

Screening recommended

For patients:

- with healthcare exposure abroad or in an endemic region in the past 12 months
- admitted to high-acuity units with prolonged lengths of stay (e.g., some ICUs, burn)

Consider screening

For patients:

- with indwelling devices, particularly those mechanically ventilated or trached
- colonized or infected with another priority MDRO



Acute care hospitals should consider screening patients on admission to the ICU for *C. auris*^{5,6}

- Screening patients admitted to some ICUs catches vulnerable patients who might not have other risk factors
- Colonized patients are more likely to develop infections
- C. auris infections are most likely to occur in patients with complex medical conditions
- ICU patients often have prolonged stays and require extensive use of medical equipment, both risk factors for infection





ICU stay is a common risk factor for *C. auris* infections⁷

Clinical features of *C. auris* infections

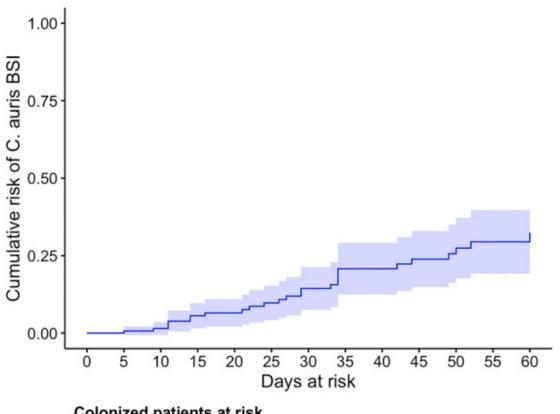
- Median length of hospitalization was 13 days, and 75% involved an ICU stay
- Median time from admission to first positive specimen collection was 2 days

C. auris infections:	
Clinical Features	Total, N = 192 (%)
Underlying Condition	
Sepsis	123 (64.1)
Diabetes	106 (55.2)
Chronic kidney disease	85 (44.3)
Pneumonia	83 (43.2)
Chronic respiratory failure	61 (31.8)
Liver disease	29 (15.1)
COVID-19	24 (12.5)
Solid organ malignancy	21 (10.9)
Medical devices	
Central venous catheter	111 (57.8)
Mechanical ventilation	83 (43.2)
Tracheostomy	29 (15.1)
Feeding tube	16 (8.3)
Urinary catheter	17 (8.9)
Total parenteral nutrition	17 (8.9)



ICU patients colonized with C. auris can develop candidemia^{8,9}

Studies have shown that 18-25% of ICU patients colonized with *C. auris* developed candidemia







Many California hospitals conduct *C. auris* admission screening

Admission screening has benefitted multiple facilities in Northern and Central California, particularly LTACHs, to:

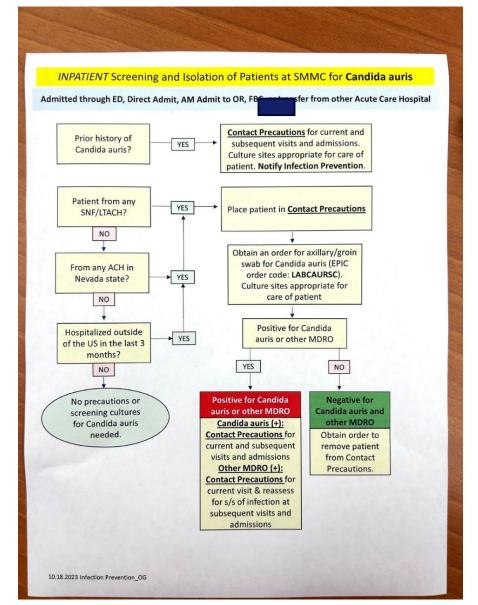


avoid the costs associated with an outbreak investigation



Example hospital admission screening

protocol





Response Screening



After identifying a patient with a priority MDRO, we can use response screening to look for transmission



Priority MDRO response screening

- Screen high-risk contacts
 - Sharing a room or bathroom with the index patient
 - Occupying the bedspace immediately after the index patient
- Other screening may be warranted
 - Point prevalence survey of unit or facility
 - Additional epi-linked screening

Reach out to your local health department to determine appropriate response screening



How quickly can a patient become colonized?¹⁰⁻¹⁵

C. auris – as soon as 4 hours

CROs – as soon as 3 days



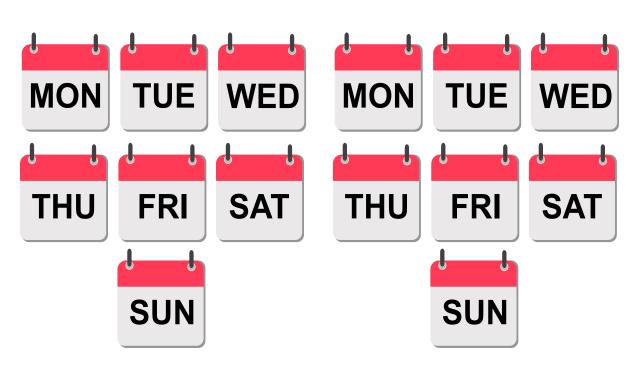




How long do MDROs live in the healthcare environment?¹⁶⁻²⁰

C. auris can survive for 2+ weeks

CROs can survive for weeks to months







Facility actions for patients or residents colonized or infected with a priority MDRO

In hospitals/LTACHs

- Flag chart in medical record for Contact Precautions
- Consider automating the creation of the interfacility transfer form
- Implement Contact Precautions

In skilled nursing facilities/vSNFs

- Keep a line list of residents colonized or infected with priority MDROs
- Prefill interfacility transfer form for emergent transfers
- Implement Enhanced Barrier Precautions

Implement appropriate IPC Practices



Additional Resources

Review our *C. auris* admission screening webinar and Tier 2 Screening Decision Tree

- Admission Screening for *C. auris* in Acute Care Hospitals – 1/23/24
 - Slides (PDF)
 (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI /CDPH%20Document%20Library/C_aur is_AdmissionScreening_in_CA_ACHs_webinar_012324.pdf)
 and Recording (youtu.be/XrbrYGidFoc) (opens in YouTube)
- Tier 2: Pathogen Screening Decision Tree (PDF)
 (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/C DPH%20Document%20Library/Tier2_Path ogen_Screening Decision Tree.pdf)



Isolate testing

Monitor for priority MDROs by reviewing antimicrobial susceptibility testing reports, testing for carbapenemases, and identifying *Candida* to the species level

Clinical and commercial labs play a critical role in MDRO surveillance

- Clinical and commercial labs should:
 - identify all Candida isolates from normally sterile sites to the species level
 - test patient specimens to determine antimicrobial resistance to carbapenems using current CLSI* breakpoints
 - test carbapenem-resistant organisms for carbapenemases



Careful use of carbapenems is essential to limit the emergence of resistance

- Carbapenems are broadspectrum antibiotics – they are effective against a wide range of bacteria
- When an organism is resistant to carbapenems, there are very few additional antibiotics that can be used
- Good antibiotic stewardship treats carbapenems as a drug of last resort

Carbapenems include:

- Imipenem
- Meropenem
- Ertapenem
- Doripenem (not used in the US)

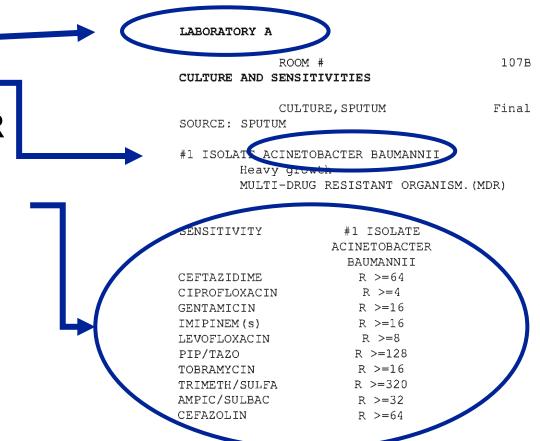






Resistance is reported through an antimicrobial susceptibility testing (AST) report

- An AST report:
 - comes from a laboratory
 - identifies the organism
 - lists antimicrobials with an S, I, or R
 - Tells if we can treat the organism with this antimicrobial
 - **S**=susceptible → Yes
 - I=intermediate → Uncertain
 - R=resistant → No





Clinical breakpoints: standards for S, I, R interpretations on the AST report

The clinical breakpoint answers the question: will **this** amount of antimicrobial prevent growth of **this** organism?

Clinical breakpoints are set by the Clinical Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)





They change over time, and laboratories are responsible for updating their testing accordingly



Clinical and commercial labs should be using current CLSI breakpoints for AST²¹

 Clinical and commercial labs should test patient specimens to determine antimicrobial resistance to carbapenems using current CLSI breakpoints

Organism/Carbapenem-Current	Imipenem/ Meropenem			Ertapenem		
Interpretation	S	I	R	S	I	R
Enterobacterales	≤1	2	≥4	≤0.5	1	≥2
Pseudomonas aeruginosa	≤2	4	≥8	NA	NA	NA
Acinetobacter baumannii	≤2	4	≥8	NA	NA	NA



Clinical breakpoints are set using the minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC)

- The MIC is the smallest amount of the antibiotic needed to prevent the growth of the organism
- The MIC:
 - Is for a **specific** organism/antimicrobial (bug/drug) combination
 - Reflects how that organism interacts with that specific antimicrobial





AST reports describe a patient's specimen relative to the clinical breakpoints

- The AST reflects the testing of a particular patient's specimen
- The MICs for the patient's specimen are compared to the clinical breakpoints set by CLSI/FDA to determine if the patient's organism is susceptible, intermediate or resistant to the antimicrobial



Compare to



Report as



I (intermediate)
R (resistant)

S (susceptible)

MICs for patient specimen

Clinical breakpoints



Clinical breakpoints and MICs on an AST report - example

Another word for susceptibility

	·
SENSITIVITY	#1 ISOLATE
	ACINETOBACTER
	BAUMANNII
CEFTAZIDIME	R >= 64
CIPROFLOXACIN	R >= 4
GENTAMICIN	R >=16
<pre>IMIPINEM(s)</pre>	R >= 16
LEVOFLOXACIN	R >=8
PIP/TAZO	R >=128
TOBRAMYCIN	R >=16
TRIMETH/SULFA	R >=320
AMPIC/SULBAC	R >=32
CEFAZOLIN	R >= 64

- This Acinetobacter baumannii isolate is resistant to imipenem
- It requires an MIC of 16 or more to prevent it from growing
- For imipenem and A. baumannii, any MIC above 8 is considered resistant – 8 is the clinical breakpoint for resistance for this bug/drug combination



How is carbapenem resistance defined and which isolates should be tested?

In this next section, we will review each of the organisms and explain when they are considered carbapenem-resistant and should be tested for carbapenemases.



When are Enterobacterales considered carbapenem-resistant (CRE)?²²

There are many species of bacteria within the Enterobacterales order, which include but are not limited to: *E. coli, Klebsiella, Enterobacter, Salmonella, Serratia,* and *Citrobacter* species (spp.)

For Enterobacterales, "carbapenem-resistant" is

MIC ≥ 4 µg/mL for imipenem or meropenem

OR

MIC ≥ 2 µg/mL for ertapenem





Some Enterobacterales have intrinsic (natural) resistance to imipenem

For Proteus, Providencia, and Morganella spp.:

"Carbapenem-resistant" is

• MIC ≥ 4 µg/mL for meropenem

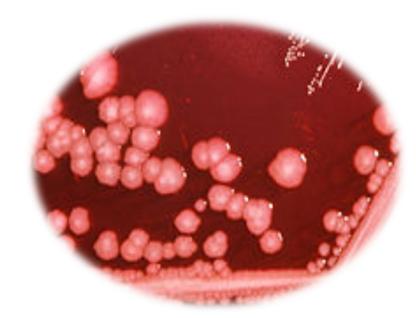
OR

MIC ≥ 2 µg/mL for ertapenem



Labs should report AST results for other carbapenems to determine resistance.





When is *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* considered carbapenem-resistant (CRPA)?²²

For Pseudomonas aeruginosa:

"Carbapenem-resistant" is

MIC ≥ 8 µg/mL for imipenem or meropenem

Note: Ertapenem is not active against P. aeruginosa.

Labs should report AST results for other carbapenems to determine resistance.





When is *Acinetobacter baumannii* considered carbapenem-resistant (CRAB)?²²

For Acinetobacter baumannii:

"Carbapenem-resistant" is

MIC ≥ 8 µg/mL for imipenem or meropenem

Note: Ertapenem is not active against A. baumannii.

Labs should report AST results for other carbapenems to determine resistance.





Clinical and commercial labs should routinely test CROs for carbapenemases²³⁻²⁴

Identifying specific carbapenemases is helpful

- Clinical treatment implications
 - IDSA guidelines
 (www.idsociety.org/practice-guideline/amr-guidance/#null)
- IPC implications
 - Cohorting
 - Response-based screening
 - Transmission-based Precautions

Per the National
Healthcare Safety
Network (NHSN),
about 60% of
hospitals in California
perform
carbapenemase
testing

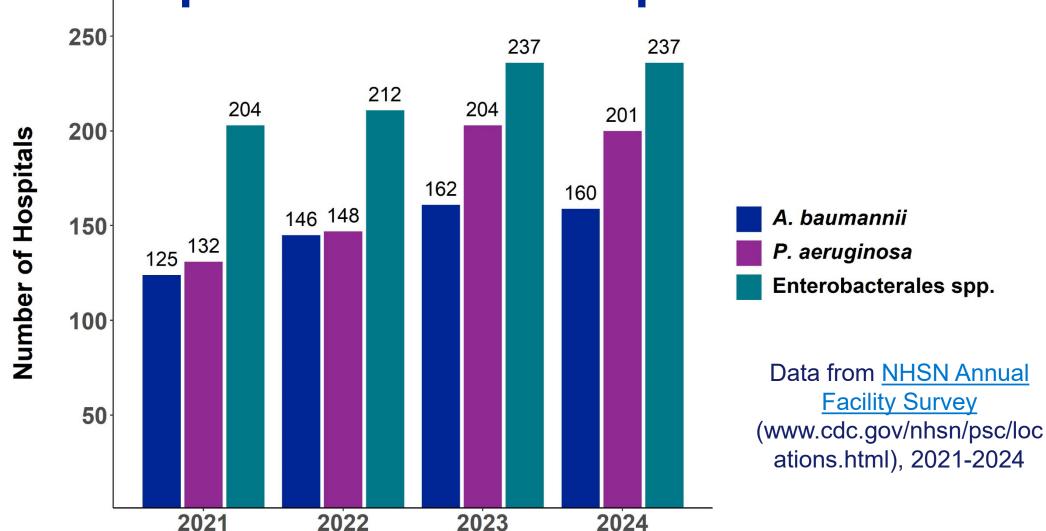


CLSI M100 2025²⁵ update on carbapenemase testing

- Laboratories <u>should</u> perform carbapenemase testing on CRE isolates
 - Assays should ideally differentiate specific carbapenemase type
 - Exception: *Proteus*, *Providencia*, and *Morganella* spp. only resistant to imipenem
 - Possible exception: <u>Enterobacter cloacae and Klebsiella aerogenes mono-resistant to ertapenem</u> (academic.oup.com/ofid/article/9/1/ofab643/6489041)
 - Resistance due to other mechanisms; carbapenemase production uncommon
 - Follow <u>CDPH guidance for ACHs on duration of Contact Precautions for patients with CROs or CPOs (PDF)</u>
 (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/CDPH%20Document%20Library/C ontactPrecautionsDurationCRO.pdf)
 - Place patient on Contact Precautions; confirm isolate is noncarbapenemase-producing if considering discontinuing



Pathogens that California hospitals routinely test for the presence of carbapenemases



When should labs submit CRO isolates to public health for testing?²²

If your lab is able to obtain carbapenemase testing for CROs:

- Routinely test CRO isolates to inform treatment, IPC measures
- If only doing phenotypic testing, submit for identification of specific carbapenemase type
- Submit CPOs with a confirmed "Big 5" carbapenemase (i.e., IMP, KPC, NDM, OXA-48, VIM), excluding KPC-producing CRE, for whole genome sequencing using MDL's standard AST form



When should labs submit CRO isolates to public health for testing?²²

If your lab is not able to obtain carbapenemase testing for CROs:

- Consider adding carbapenemase testing
- Forward CROs meeting criteria* to the Microbial Diseases Lab (MDL) via local public health lab for carbapenemase testing

*Reach out to us for more details on which isolates to submit to public health



Testing for carbapenemase production²⁶

Detection of carbapenemase production (phenotypic tests)

- Examples: Modified Carbapenem Inactivation Method (mCIM), Star-CARBA, CarbaNP, BD Phoenix CPO Detect
- Results report whether the organism is producing a carbapenemase or not (e.g., yes/no)

Detection of carbapenemase type (molecular, other tests)

- Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) (e.g., Cepheid Xpert Carba-R), Hardy CARBA 5, whole genome sequencing)
- Results report which carbapenemase types are present (e.g., KPC, NDM)



Lab developed

test

Commercial

Lab developed

test

Commercial

Commercial or lab

developed test

Lab developed

test

reatures of some carbapenemase tests-								
Tests method	Accuracy	TAT	Relative Cost	Limitation	Accessibility			
Penotypic								
Modified Hodge test	Moderate	Next day	\$	NOT RECOMMENDED: Poor sensitivity for NDM and poor specificity with AmpC	Lab developed test			

\$

\$-\$\$\$

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For CRE and CRPA only

For CRE and CRPA only, poor

sensitivity for OXA-48

Poor sensitivity for Class D OXAs

(OXA-23, 24/40)

Limited to specific carbapenemases,

not validated for CRAB

Limited to specific gene targets

Unable to detect novel carbapenemase

mCIM.

CarbaNP

STAR-Carba

Molecular (Other)

Lateral flow assay

(e.g., Carba5)

PCR (multiplex,

real-time PCR)

WGS

High

Moderate

High

High

High

High

Next day

Next day

Next day

< 24 hrs

< 24 hrs

Several

days

Testing Candida isolates to determine the species



In this section, we'll discuss recommendations for testing isolates to determine *Candida* to the species level



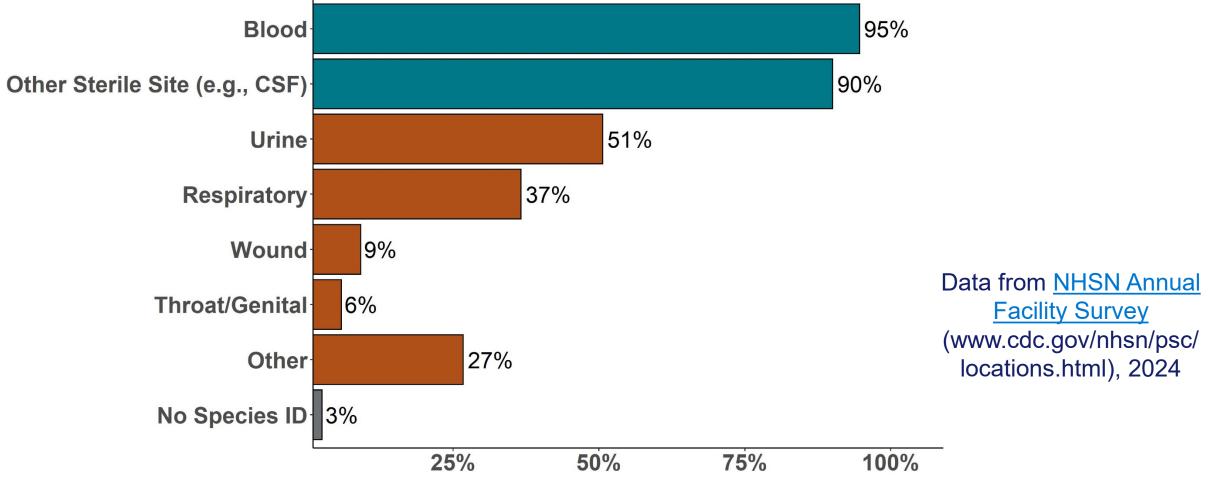
Clinical and commercial labs should identify Candida isolates to the species level

Hospitals should consider species-level identification of all isolates (sterile and non-sterile) from patients at highest risk for *C. auris*

Per NHSN, 95% of hospitals in California routinely identify *Candida* isolates to the species level for blood specimens



Candida blood specimens are most likely to be identified to the species level



Percent of Hospitals

Clinical labs should conduct surveillance for *C. auris*²⁸⁻²⁹

Culture

- On chromogenic media, C. auris can be differentiated from common Candida species
- All suspect colonies must be identified to the species level (public health accepts isolates for species identification)

Polymerase chain reaction (PCR)

- Real-time PCR is an accurate method for detecting *C. auris* and provides the fastest results for public health action
- PCR is recommended for admission screening

A comparison of the costs of these two methods is available from Verification, Analytical Sensitivity, Cost-effectiveness, and Comparison of 4 *Candida* auris Screening Methods



When should labs submit *Candida* isolates for testing?

Labs that can identify Candida to the species level

 Submit sterile site, urine and unusual epidemiology* specimens for antifungal susceptibility testing (AFST)

*Unusual epidemiology includes patients:

- With healthcare exposure abroad or outside of Southern California
- With echinocandin-resistant isolates
- <18 years old
- Without exposure in inpatient healthcare settings (e.g., outpatient clinic, prison)



When should labs submit *Candida* isolates for testing?

Labs that cannot identify Candida to the species level

- Submit non-albicans Candida for testing
 - Reach out to us for more details on submitting to public health



Additional Resources

Our website has webinars and resources you might find useful

- CPOs: CDPH Laboratory and Epidemiology Updates – 5/14/24
 - Webinar slides (PDF) and Webinar Recording
- C. auris Reporting, Surveillance, and Lab Testing – 11/9/22
 - Slides (PDF) and Recording
- Carbapenemase Testing for CROs: A Primer for Clinical and Public Health Laboratories (PDF) (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/CDPH %20Document%20Library/CRO_PrimerTests_f or_Carbapenemases.pdf)
- CPO Screening Implementation Guide (PDF)
 (www.aphl.org/aboutAPHL/publications/Documents/ID-CPO-Screening-Guide.pdf)



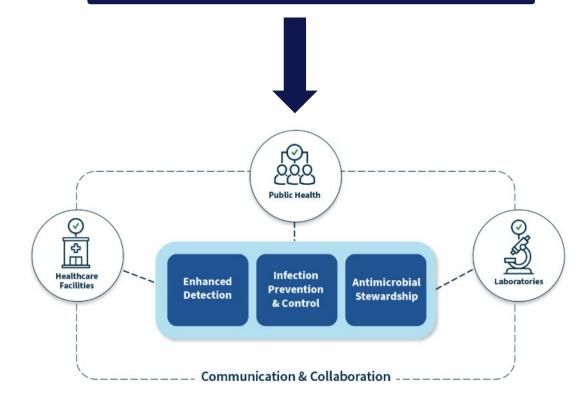
Summary

Testing and reporting help improve patient safety

MDRO lab surveillance allows for:

- timely case and outbreak detection
- implementation of appropriate infection prevention & control measures
- promotion of <u>antimicrobial stewardship</u> (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI /Pages/AntimicrobialStewardshipLandin gPage.aspx) through informed treatment decision-making
- public health monitoring to understand epidemiology and implement focused prevention and response strategies

Thank you to all of our laboratory and healthcare facility partners!





Resources

Resources: C. auris

- CDPH C. auris website
 (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/Candida-auris.aspx)
- <u>C. auris Quicksheet and Response Phases (PDF)</u>
 (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/CDPH%20Document%20Library/CaurisQuicksheet.pdf)
- CDPH C. auris Reporting FAQ (PDF) (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/ CHCQ/HAI/CDPH%20Document%20Library/CaurisReportingFAQ.pdf)
- <u>EPA List P Agents</u> (www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-p-antimicrobial-products-registered-epa-claims-against-candida-auris



Resources: C. auris

- LACDPH List of Laboratories with C. auris Testing Capacity (PDF)
 (publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/docs/List_C.aurisLabs.pdf)
- Admission Screening for C. auris in Hospitals Webinar Slides (PDF)
 (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ /HAI/CDPH%20Document%20Library/C_auris_AdmissionScreening_in_CA_ACHs_webinar_012324.pdf)
- CDPH Interfacility Transfer Communication
 (www.cdph.ca.gov /Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/InterfacilityCommunication .aspx)



Resources: CPOs

- CDPH CROs and CPOs website
 (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/CarbapenemaseProducing Organisms.aspx)
- CDPH CPO Quicksheet and Response Phases (PDF)
 (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/CDPH%20Document%20Library/CPOQuicksheet.pdf)
- CDPH Prioritizing Carbapenemase Testing Algorithm (PDF)
 (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/CDPH%20Document% 20Library/CPTestingPrioritizationAlgorithm.pdf)



Resources: CPOs

- CDPH CPO Reporting FAQ (PDF)
 (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/CDPH%20Document%20 Library/CPOReportingFAQ.pdf)
- CDPH MDL Carbapenemase Testing FAQ (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/cls/idld/mdl/Pages/MDL-Expanded-Carbapenemase-Testing-Services-FAQs-2025.aspx)
- Carbapenemase Testing for CROs: A Primer for Clinical and Public Health Laboratories (PDF)
 - (www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/CDPH%20Document%20Library/CRO _PrimerTests_for_Carbapenemases.pdf)



Resources: CPOs

CPO Screening Implementation Guide (PDF)

(www.aphl.org/aboutAPHL/publications/Documents/ID-CPO-Screening-Guide.pdf)



Resources: Other

Antimicrobial Stewardship

(www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/AntimicrobialStewardshipLandingPage.aspx)



- 1. <u>Tracking C. auris | Candida auris (C. auris) | CDC</u> (www.cdc.gov/candida-auris/tracking-c-auris/index.html)
- 2. Epidemiology of Carbapenem-Resistant Enterobacteriaceae: The Impact and Evolution of a Global Menace | The Journal of Infectious Diseases | Oxford Academic (academic.oup.com/jid/article/215/suppl_1/S28/3092084)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (NCEZID), Division of Foodborne, Waterborne, and Environmental Disease, last reviewed January 13, 2021 (DFWED) (PDF) (stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/100943/cdc_100943_DS1.pdf)



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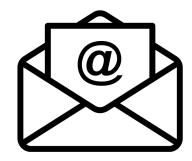
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Thank You

Questions?



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