

## **ESBL Patient information**

One of your tests shows the presence of bacteria producing extended-spectrum beta-lactamase (ESBL). Infections with ESBL producing bacteria may require special antibiotics. Therefore, while in hospital, there will be special measures around you to avoid spreading to other patients. We hope this information will give you an understanding of why we have such measures.

### **What is ESBL?**

Bacteria that produce ESBL are often found in the intestine. ESBL gives the bacteria strength to resist a number of ordinary antibiotics. Usually they are not noticeable, but sometimes they can lead to infections.

### **Is ESBL dangerous?**

ESBL producing bacteria are not dangerous when they are a part of the normal bacterial flora in the intestine. In these cases it is called carriage, and is not treated. As infections with ESBL producing bacteria can be hard to treat, we do not want spreading in hospitals.

### **How did you get ESBL?**

Intestinal bacteria are transmitted from person to person via unclean hands, unclean contact points or via polluted food or water. ESBL producing bacteria are more common outside the Nordic countries, and hospital admission abroad gives a greater risk of transmission.

### **How is ESBL treated?**

If you get an infection with these bacteria, it often has to be treated with other kinds of antibiotics than the ones normally used. Therefore, treating such infections is often associated with more side effects and a longer stay in hospital.

### **What does healthcare personnel do to avoid spreading of ESBL producing bacteria?**

You might be isolated in a separate room to avoid ESBL producing bacteria spreading to other patients. In some cases healthcare personnel will use protective equipment like gloves and a yellow coat. There are different types of ESBL producing bacteria, and healthcare personnel will inform you and your visitors of the measures used in your situation. It is important that everyone applies hand hygiene when entering and leaving your room.

### **What to do when you get home?**

- Good hand hygiene using hand sanitizer or washing hands with soap and water are the most important measures to avoid spreading of the bacteria. You can otherwise live and work as normal.
- Inform about ESBL whenever contacting healthcare service. Then preventive measures can be taken to avoid spreading of ESBL. Special measures regarding a carrier of ESBL will only be taken in health care institutions.