

Candida auris Screening

Information for Patients/Residents and Families

What is *Candida auris*?

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

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

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 and to learn more about where the germ is found. Even patients who do not have symptoms will be tested to see if they carry the germ. Your doctors will be able to make better decisions 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 to check your armpit and groin, the area where your leg joins your body. A nurse or doctor will use a swab (like a Q-tip) to gently rub your armpits and groin. This germ can also be carried in the nostrils, so a nurse or doctor will also use a different swab to rub the inside of your nose. The testing is not painful and there are no side effects. Multiple lab tests will be performed on the swabs. The final result of all tests should be available in a few weeks. There will be no charge to you for this testing.

Why are healthcare staff members swabbing objects and surfaces in my room?

This germ can live on surfaces and objects for weeks. The hospital or long-term care facility where you or your family member is staying is testing different surfaces and objects to be sure that the room is cleaned well, and to help prevent spreading the germ to other patients.

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Do I have a choice of whether to be tested?

Yes. This testing is voluntary. You can choose not to get tested. However, it is helpful to you and your provider to know if you carry this germ. For example, if you get sick later your doctors will be able to make better treatment decisions for you if they know that you carry this germ. It will also be very helpful for the hospital or nursing home where you're staying to know whether you carry this germ so they can help prevent it from spreading to other people.

What happens if these germs are found on me?

If the test is **positive**, it means you are carrying the germ on your body but aren't 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 decisions. Also, 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 roommate(s) carefully and by wearing a gown and gloves when caring for you. Your doctor might recommend you get another test later to see if the germ is gone. However, not everyone will need another test.

If your test is **negative**, you probably don't carry this germ.

Your test results will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law. The results will be shared with you, your healthcare providers, and the New York State Department of Health, and possibly your local health department.

If I do carry the germ, should I worry about it spreading to my family members when they come to visit me?

The risk of healthy people getting sick from this germ is low. Family, friends, and others can still come to visit you. They should wash their hands well after caring for you or visiting you to decrease the chance of getting the germ. You should also wash your hands often. Family members should talk with nursing staff to see if they need to wear gloves or gowns while visiting.

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What else should I know if I do carry this germ?

If you receive medical care at a healthcare facility such as a hospital or nursing home in the future, be sure to let your healthcare providers know about the results so that they can make the best treatment decisions for you and take steps to prevent the germ from spreading to others.

Where can I get additional information?

Please go to the CDC webpage about *Candida auris*:

<https://www.cdc.gov/fungal/diseases/candidiasis/candida-auris-qanda.html>

Please also go to the NYSDOH webpage about *Candida auris*:

https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/c_auris/

Adapted from *Frequently Asked Questions about Screening Tests for Candida auris* from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For more information, please see attached CDC *Candida auris* fact sheet, also available here:

www.cdc.gov/fungal/diseases/candidiasis/pdf/Candida_auris_508.pdf