Infection Prevention Rapid Resource

CPOs: Prevention for Everybody

CPOs (called carbapenemase-producing organisms) are dangerous germs that are hard to cure but spread fast. CPOs can also lead to serious health problems like:

- **Pneumonia**
- **Urinary tract infections** (UTIs)
- **Bloodstream infections** (CPOs in your blood)

How Do CPOs Spread?

You can catch CPOs even from someone who doesn't feel sick, so avoid:

→ Contaminated surfaces in healthcare settings (like bedrails, IV poles, and medical equipment)

→ Touching others if your or their hands are not clean

→ Using unclean medical devices (like catheters, ventilators, and IV)

How Do I Stay Healthy?

Clean your hands with soap and sanitizer often.

Follow facility rules when you visit someone with a CPO.

Ask your healthcare provider about CPOs and tell them if you've had one.

CPOs spread fast in healthcare settings like hospitals and long-term care facilities.

Am I at Risk?

You're at risk for a CPO infection if:

→ You have recently taken antiobiotics, which make it easier for CPOs to grow.

→ You have used an invasive device or are in a healthcare facility.

→ You have a weak immune system, cancer, or diabetes.

→ You have traveled to areas with widespread CPO infections.

Many strong drugs (last-line antiobiotics) do not work against CPOs.

Scan to learn more from VDH about CPO safety.

VDH Virginia Department of Health

HAI&AR Healthcare-Associated Infections & Antimicrobial Resistance Program, Virginia Department of Health

https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/haiar/cro/

Updated July 2025