

## What can I do to help?

In order to help prevent the spread of CRAB into the environment, please wash your hands especially after using the toilet.

You can ask the staff looking after you to wash their hands or use alcohol hand rub and wear an apron and gloves prior to performing any care.

## What will happen when I go home?

At home, you will need to ensure you practise good hand washing.

If you are admitted to another hospital please let the staff looking after you know you have had a positive CRAB result.

Also let your GP know.

## How can I get more information?

The Infection Prevention and Control nurses visit each ward at least once per day; ask your nurse to contact us.

Alternatively, you can telephone the Infection Prevention and Control Team in the hospital on 4433 1181.

## Contact details

### Infection Prevention and Control

Townsville University Hospital  
100 Angus Smith Drive  
Douglas QLD 4814

**Phone:** (07) 4433 1181

Townsville Hospital and Health Service  
100 Angus Smith Drive, Douglas QLD 4810

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# Carbapenem resistant *Acinetobacter baumannii* (CRAB)

A guide for patients and visitors of the  
Townsville Hospital and Health Service



Infection Prevention  
and Control



Queensland  
Government

## What is Acinetobacter?

Acinetobacter is a type of bacteria that can be found in many sources in the environment, including water and soil. Some forms of Acinetobacter can cause infections.

## What can Acinetobacter cause?

Acinetobacter can sometimes cause skin or wound infections. In patients who are ill, it can cause lung infections (pneumonia) or infection in the blood (bacteraemia).

## How is Acinetobacter treated?

Many forms of Acinetobacter are easily treated with antibiotics.

Some forms have become resistant to common antibiotics and this is called Carbapenem resistant Acinetobacter baumannii (CRAB). These types of infections are more difficult to treat.

Not all patients with CRAB need antibiotics. The bacteria may live on the skin or in wounds without causing infections.

## Who is at risk of infection?

People who are already ill or have an impaired immune system and have been admitted to hospital are more susceptible to infection.

## How does Acinetobacter spread?

It is spread by direct physical contact with an affected patient or their surroundings. This includes touching sheets, dressings, bedding and hospital equipment.

It is often spread by hands and that is why hand hygiene is so important.

**It is OK for you to ask staff if they have washed their hands prior to touching you.**



## What will this mean for my hospital care?

All patients who have a positive result for CRAB are managed with special precautions to prevent the spread to other patients.

Ideally, you will be nursed in a single room and the staff will wear an apron and gloves to care for you.

An alert sign will be placed outside your door to inform all staff of the precautions required before giving you care.

You are still able to move outside your room, but please wash your hands. Avoid visiting other patients in the hospital.

Your visitors only need to wash their hands before visiting you and when they leave unless they are visiting other patients in the hospital. In that case they should also wear an apron and gloves when visiting you.

Acinetobacter baumannii does not usually pose a threat to healthy people, hospital staff, to family members or your close contacts.