

New CDC Vital Signs: Lethal, Drug-resistant Bacteria Spreading in U.S. Healthcare Facilities

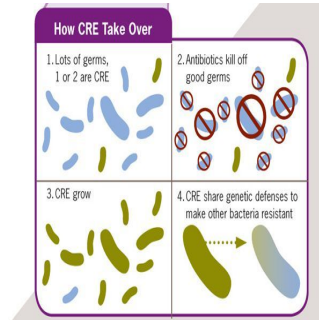


Image Credit: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Drug-resistant germs called [carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae](#), or CRE, are on the rise and have become more resistant to last-resort antibiotics during the past decade, according to a new CDC [Vital Signs](#) report. These bacteria are causing more hospitalized patients to get infections that, in some cases, are impossible to treat.

CRE are lethal bacteria that pose a triple threat:

- **Resistance:** CRE are resistant to all, or nearly all, the antibiotics we have - even our most powerful drugs of last-resort.
- **Death:** CRE have high mortality rates – CRE germs kill 1 in 2 patients who get bloodstream infections from them.
- **Spread of disease:** CRE easily transfer their antibiotic resistance to other bacteria. For example, carbapenem-resistant klebsiella can spread its drug-destroying weapons to a normal *E. coli* bacteria, which makes the *E. coli* resistant to antibiotics also. That could create a nightmare scenario since *E. coli* is the most common cause of urinary tract infections in healthy people.

Currently, almost all CRE infections occur in people receiving significant medical care. CRE are usually transmitted from person-to-person, often on the hands of health care workers. In 2012, CDC released a concise, practical [CRE prevention toolkit](#) with in-depth recommendations to control CRE transmission in hospitals, long-term acute care facilities, and nursing homes. Recommendations for health departments are also included. CRE can be carried by patients from one health care setting to another. Therefore, facilities are encouraged to work together, using a regional "Detect and Protect" approach, to implement CRE prevention programs.

In addition to detailed data about the rise of CRE, the Vital Signs report details steps health care providers, CEOs and chief medical officers, state health departments and patients can take now to slow, and even stop, CRE before it becomes widespread throughout the country.

Source: [CDC](#)

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