

**Communicable Disease Epidemiology  
and Immunization Section**

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**Health Advisory – *Candida auris* identified in Oregon, 4 January, 2021**

**Action Requested**

- Be aware that [Candida auris was recently detected in a patient in Oregon](#), with subsequent healthcare-associated transmission to other patients.
- Be aware of growing concerns for multidrug-resistant *C. auris* infections in the U.S.
- Consultation with an ID specialist and Public Health – Seattle and King County is highly recommended when *C. auris* colonization or infection is suspected to ensure appropriate testing and [treatment](#).
- Consider *C. auris* screening in patients at high risk for *C. auris*, including those who had:
  - Close contact in a healthcare setting to someone diagnosed with *C. auris* infection or colonization
  - An overnight stay in a healthcare facility outside the U.S. or in a [region within the U.S. with documented C. auris cases](#) in the previous year.
- Inquire about the above high risk exposures in all newly admitted patients.
- Coordinate *C. auris* screening and testing with Public Health at (206) 296-4774.
- Be aware that *C. auris* can be misidentified through laboratory testing as a number of different organisms and [specific technology is needed](#).
- Remain vigilant for any increase in infections due to unidentified *Candida* species in a patient care unit, including from urine specimens, and consider *C. auris* since it can be transmitted in healthcare settings.
- Patients in hospitals with suspected or confirmed *C. auris* should be managed using contact precautions, and placed in a single room whenever possible.
- Reinforce and audit core [infection prevention practices in healthcare facilities](#).
- Communicate information about colonization or infection with *C. auris* during care transitions within and transfers between healthcare settings. [CDC Interfacility transfer form](#)
- Please immediately report any suspected or confirmed *C. auris* cases or outbreaks to Public Health at (206) 296-4774.

**Background**

Since its discovery in 2009, [C. auris](#) has emerged globally as a life-threatening, highly transmissible, often multidrug resistant yeast. In the past year CDC has published several reports of ongoing transmission of highly resistant strains of *C. auris* in United States healthcare facilities, particularly in units caring for patients recovering from COVID-19 <sup>1,2,3</sup> Patients with long term acute care and indwelling devices are at highest risk for acquisition. International healthcare is often the initial source of introduction of *C. auris* to a region. Subsequent healthcare transmission may occur due to shedding in the healthcare environment, resistance of *C. auris* to standard healthcare disinfectants, and lapses in infection control practices.

*C. auris* has not yet been detected in Washington but represents a serious threat. For details about where cases have been identified within the U.S., see the map [here](#). WA DOH performs special surveillance for *C. auris* by screening isolates submitted from high risk patients and sentinel lab submissions of non-*albicans* *Candida* species to the WA Public Health Laboratory for identification.

***C. auris* will become a notifiable condition in WA as of January 1, 2023. In the meantime, we consider *C. auris* to be reportable immediately to Public Health as a ‘rare condition of public health significance.’ All suspected HAI outbreaks (which includes a single case of *C. auris* in a healthcare facility) are also required to be reported immediately to Public Health.**

### References

1. Prestel C, Anderson E, Forsberg K, et al. *Candida auris* Outbreak in a COVID-19 Specialty Care Unit — Florida, July–August 2020. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2021;70:56–57. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7002e3>
2. Lyman M, Forsberg K, Reuben J, et al. Notes from the Field: Transmission of Pan-Resistant and Echinocandin-Resistant *Candida auris* in Health Care Facilities — Texas and the District of Columbia, January–April 2021. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2021;70:1022–1023. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7029a2>
3. Adams E, Quinn M, Tsay S, et al. *Candida auris* in Healthcare Facilities, New York, USA, 2013–2017. *Emerg Infect Dis*. 2018;24(10):1816–1824. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3201/eid2410.180649>

### Resources

- Washington State Department of Health *Candida auris* resources: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/NotifiableConditions/Candidaauris>
- *Candida auris* testing information: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/PublicHealthLaboratories/ARLNLabTestMenu#heading21551>
- Environmental Protection Agency List P: Antimicrobial Products Registered with EPA for Claims Against *Candida auris*: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-p-antimicrobial-products-registered-epa-claims-against-candida-auris>