

**PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY**  
**VERONA INTEGRON-ENCODED METALLO- $\beta$ -  
LACTAMASE (VIM) CARBAPENEM-RESISTANT  
*PSEUDOMONAS AERUGINOSA* (CRPA) INFECTIONS  
AFTER HOSPITALIZATION IN TIJUANA  
APRIL 3, 2019**

### Situation

To date, CDC has received 25 reports (20 confirmed and 5 suspected) of VIM-CRPA in a multistate cluster related to medical facilities in Tijuana. As of April 3, 2019, 11 California residents, including one person from Riverside County, have been identified as being referred for surgery in Tijuana, Mexico. Disease Control is following up with the individual to assess their current clinical status. CDC continues to recommend (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/alert/drug-resistant-infections-mexico>) that travelers to Mexico not have any surgery at Grand View Hospital in Tijuana until further notice. In addition, Mexican health officials identified concerns about medical device and instrument reprocessing at Grand View Hospital, indicating the facility did not follow recommended procedures for assuring the quality of sterilization processes. CDC recommends (<https://www.cdc.gov/hai/outbreaks/pseudomonas-aeruginosa.html>) that patients who have had surgery at Grand View Hospital on or after August 1, 2018 should discuss with their healthcare provider possible screening for hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV.

Traveling abroad for medical care is increasingly common. Medical and surgical procedures done anywhere (including the United States) carry some risk and can result in complications, including infection. Prior to travel, CDC recommends that individuals consult a local travel medicine specialist at least a month before departure. Travelers should consult their own physician and research (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/medical-tourism>) the foreign provider who will perform any planned procedure as well as the clinic or hospital where the care will be provided.

### Recommendations for Providers

- **Advise** patients who are seeking medical care outside the United States to research the foreign provider. In particular, they should not have any procedures at Grand View Hospital until further notice.

- **Consider screening** for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and HIV in any patient who had a surgical procedure at Grand View Hospital after August 1, 2018.
- **Be vigilant** for the possibility of resistant infections occurring in patients who have traveled abroad for medical procedures, especially those with a history of invasive procedures in Tijuana.
- **Perform rectal screening** for carbapenemase-producing organisms when admitting patients who have a history of overnight stays in foreign healthcare facilities.
  - This recommendation applies to patients hospitalized outside the U.S. at any time during the six months before their local hospital admission.
  - Consider placing such patients in isolation and contact precautions while awaiting screening results, especially those with infections after invasive procedures in Tijuana.
- **Obtain cultures** and perform antimicrobial susceptibility testing to guide treatment of infections in patients who have a history of having undergone invasive procedures.
- **Isolate patients** from whom carbapenemase-producing organisms are obtained (regardless of specimen source) with contact precautions; ask them about receipt of healthcare outside the U.S., including medical tourism, in the six months prior to positive culture.
- **Consult** with an infectious disease specialist when caring for patients with carbapenemase-producing organisms. These infections may be difficult to treat, and may require protracted and complex antibacterial drug combinations and courses.
- **Report all cases** of carbapenemase-producing organisms and any case of a surgical site infection in patients who have recently undergone surgery in foreign medical facilities. Call Disease Control during normal business hours at (951) 358-5107 (Mon-Fri 8 AM to 5 PM) or fax a Confidential Morbidity Report to (951) 358-5102.
- **Test** any carbapenem-resistant *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* or *Enterobacteriaceae* for Verona integron-encoded metallo- $\beta$ -lactamase (VIM) and other plasmid-mediated carbapenemases.
  - Specimens for mechanism testing for VIM and other plasmid-mediated carbapenemases should be submitted to the Riverside County Public Health Laboratory to be forwarded to the State Microbial Diseases Laboratory.
  - Contact the Riverside County Public Health Laboratory at 951-358-5070 for questions regarding submission of specimens.

- **Refer** to additional response measures in the recently updated CDC Interim Guidance (<https://www.cdc.gov/hai/containment/guidelines.html>) on containing novel or targeted multidrug-resistant organisms.

## Resources

- CDC Travel Alert on Drug-resistant Infections in Mexico (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/alert/drug-resistant-infections-mexico>)
- CDC Clinician Information on Medical Tourism (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2018/the-pre-travel-consultation/medical-tourism>)
- CDC Traveler Information on Medical Tourism (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/medical-tourism>)
- CDC Interim Guidance for a Public Health Response to Contain Novel or Targeted Multidrug-resistant Organisms (MDROs) – January 2019 Update (<https://www.cdc.gov/hai/containment/guidelines.html>)
- CDC website: Carbapenem-resistant *Enterobacteriaceae* in Healthcare Settings (<https://www.cdc.gov/hai/organisms/cre/index.html>)
- CDC toolkit: Facility Guidance for Control of Carbapenem-resistant *Enterobacteriaceae* (CRE) – November 2015 Update (<https://www.cdc.gov/hai/pdfs/cre/CRE-guidance-508.pdf>)
- California Department of Public Health website: Hospital Acquired Infection Program (<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/HAIProgramHome.aspx>)

We appreciate your help in keeping all residents of Riverside County healthy.

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