



Yamhill County  
Health and Human Services  
Public Health

# ALERT

**COPY AND DISTRIBUTE TO  
Health Care Providers**

To: Health Care Providers in Yamhill County

From: Yamhill County Public Health

Date: **12/28/21**

Regarding: *First Case of Candida auris in Oregon*

Phone number for follow-up: **(503) 434-7483**

Colleagues,

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) is investigating the state's first case of infection by *Candida auris*, an emerging, often multidrug-resistant yeast that can cause invasive healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) with high mortality. The *C. auris* isolated from this patient is susceptible to multiple antifungal agents. Notably, this first case presented with an extensive history of international health care exposure.

The Oregon Public Health Division's HAI Program is working with local public health, health care professionals, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the regional public health laboratory to prevent the spread arising from this case.

## **Important actions for health care facility infection prevention and control programs**

1. Consider identifying patients with recent international health care exposure, who may be at high risk for *Candida auris*, and proactive precautions discussed below. Colonization screening assistance may be available upon request (see OHA contacts below).
2. Have a plan in place to respond to cases of *Candida auris*. Visit CDC's *auris* website at [www.cdc.gov/fungal/candida-auris](http://www.cdc.gov/fungal/candida-auris) for more information. *C. auris* can spread readily via contaminated surfaces and hands; response plans should incorporate:
  - a. Rapid implementation of contact precautions;
  - b. Enhanced environmental disinfection with an antimicrobial product that has registered claims against *C. auris* ([www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-p-antimicrobial-products-registered-epa-claims-against-candida-auris](http://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-p-antimicrobial-products-registered-epa-claims-against-candida-auris));
  - c. Monitoring of healthcare personnel hand hygiene practices.
3. Monitor PPE practices on COVID units to prevent spread of *auris*. Multidrug-resistant organisms, including *C. auris*, can spread readily in COVID units. Gloves should be worn as single-use in all circumstances. Gowns should never be re-used, and extended use of gowns should be limited to crisis-level supply shortages.

## **Important actions for clinical laboratories**

1. Report all *C. auris*-positive specimens to OHA immediately (971-673-1111).
2. Be aware that *C. auris* can be misidentified as other species ([www.cdc.gov/fungal/candida-auris/identification.html](http://www.cdc.gov/fungal/candida-auris/identification.html)). Confirmatory testing of *C. auris* and other commonly misidentified *Candida* spp. is available through the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory's partnership with the regional Antibiotic Resistance Laboratory Network (ARLN). If your laboratory needs support for *Candida* testing, contact Heather Hertzelt ([heather.hertzelt2@state.or.us](mailto:heather.hertzelt2@state.or.us)).

Please direct questions about this particular investigation to Heather Hertzelt ([heather.hertzelt2@state.or.us](mailto:heather.hertzelt2@state.or.us)) and Dat Tran ([dat.j.tran@state.or.us](mailto:dat.j.tran@state.or.us)) or the on-call ACDP epidemiologist (971-673-1111).

*This alert was sent to LPHA and Tribal administrators, health officers, CD nurses, hospital IPs, and other PHD staff. Additional notice was sent to Oregon State Public Health Laboratory clients and partners.*

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Unless otherwise noted, feel free to share this HAN Notification with:

- Others within your organization.
- Professionals within your health, preparedness, and response affiliations.

Oregon 24/7 disease reporting: 971-673-1111