



TN Health Alert Network Communication

April 27, 2023

Rise in *Candida auris* cases in Tennessee

The Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) Healthcare-Associated Infections and Antimicrobial Resistance (HAI/AR) program has identified 140 total cases of *Candida auris* since 01/17/2022. *C. auris*, reportable in Tennessee, is a yeast that can cause high morbidity and mortality, outbreaks in healthcare settings, and is often highly drug resistant. TDH has seen a rise in clinical and screening cases in 2023. Cases were reported in southeastern Tennessee in 2022 but have now spread to West and Middle Tennessee. Asymptomatic colonization likely represents the greatest source of transmission within healthcare facilities. TDH's HAI/AR team is working closely with stakeholders to identify cases and contain spread. Measures to contain spread include broad colonization screening, institution of appropriate transmission-based precautions, and the use of specialized disinfectants on [List P](#) or [List K](#).

TDH reminds providers and healthcare facilities:

- Patients with active infections or colonization with *C. auris* can be managed safely utilizing [Transmission-Based Precautions](#).
- Decisions to discharge or admit patients from one level of care to another should be based on clinical criteria and the ability of the accepting facility to provide care, not on the presence or absence of *C. auris* infection or colonization.
- A positive or pending result **should not** prevent accepting an admission.
- The TDH HAI/AR Program encourages the use of admission screening for high-risk populations.
- When a clinical *C. auris* case is detected, CDC and TDH recommend expanded colonization screening often at the ward or whole facility level.
- *C. auris* can persist on surfaces in healthcare environments. Thorough daily and terminal cleaning and disinfection with products from EPA-registered [List P](#) or [List K](#) is recommended.
- If a facility is experiencing capacity limitations, the HAI/AR Program can consult on alternative risk-based containment strategies.

The TDH HAI/AR Program provides free containment support including screening swabs, laboratory services, and Infection Control assessments to all facility types.

Additional information may be found here: [CDC Healthcare Professionals FAQs](#) and [CDC General Information on *C. auris*](#).

Additional information is available on that [HAI/AR website](#) including the pathophysiology and transmission of *C. auris* in healthcare settings. Questions may be directed to HAI.Health@tn.gov or 615-741-7247.