



DATE:	02/27/2019
TO:	Health Alert Network
FROM:	Dr. Rachel Levine, Secretary of Health
SUBJECT:	VIM-producing carbapenem-resistant <i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> (CRPA) infection in patients with a history of invasive procedures at Grand View Hospital in Tijuana, Mexico
DISTRIBUTION:	Statewide
LOCATION:	n/a
STREET ADDRESS:	n/a
COUNTY:	n/a
MUNICIPALITY:	n/a
ZIP CODE:	n/a

This transmission is a “Health Advisory”: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

- HOSPITALS:** PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, PEDIATRIC, NURSING AND LABORATORY STAFF IN YOUR HOSPITAL
- EMS COUNCILS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE
- FQHCs:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE
- LOCAL HEALTH JURISDICTIONS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE
- PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP
- LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES:** PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, INFECTION CONTROL, AND NURSING STAFF IN YOUR FACILITY

Summary

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is investigating an outbreak of VIM-producing carbapenem-resistant *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (CRPA) infections in patients with a history of invasive procedures at Grand View Hospital in Tijuana, Mexico. Most patients underwent bariatric surgery and presented with surgical site infections.
- When caring for patients who have a history of invasive procedures in Tijuana, Mexico obtain cultures and perform antimicrobial susceptibility testing to guide treatment.
- Immediately report any carbapenem-resistant *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (CRPA) surgical site infections in patients who have a history of invasive procedures in Tijuana, Mexico by contacting your local health department or calling 1-877-PA-HEALTH. Save any available isolates for further testing at the state public health laboratory.

Background:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are investigating an outbreak of infections in patients who underwent invasive procedures at Grand View Hospital in Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico.

Infections implicated in the outbreak are caused by carbapenem-resistant *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (CRPA). The resistance mechanism is a mobile genetic element known as the Verona integron metallo- β -lactamase (VIM). This is a rare and highly transmissible mechanism of resistance requiring stringent infection control measures.

To date, CDC has identified 17 patients with confirmed VIM-CRPA who reported undergoing surgery in Tijuana, Mexico; 13 of them at Grand View Hospital. Patients presented with surgical site or bloodstream infections with a median specimen collection date 12 days following their surgery. Of the 13 patients who had surgery at Grand View Hospital, Tijuana, Mexico, many reported booking their surgery through a travel agency called WeightLossAgents. CDC also received reports of patients with VIM-CRPA following invasive procedures at four other Tijuana facilities, although at this time there is no evidence of ongoing transmission at these facilities.

On February 15, 2019 WeightLossAgents contacted all persons they referred to Grand View Hospital since August 1, 2018 to inform them of this outbreak and the potential risk of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* infection as well as bloodborne pathogen exposure.

Recommendation for Healthcare Providers

- US health care providers should be vigilant for the possibility of resistant infections occurring in patients who have traveled abroad for medical procedures. Take measures to control the spread of multidrug-resistant organisms in the United States. According to CDC, ongoing exposure is possible at Grand View Hospital in Tijuana, Mexico.
- Providers caring for patients with a history of invasive procedures in Mexico should be aware of the potential for infections caused by resistant pathogens.
- CRPA are drug-resistant and difficult to treat, requiring protracted and complex antibacterial drug regimens. Consult with an infectious disease specialist if a CRPA infection is suspected or confirmed.
- When caring for patients with a surgical site infection who have a history of invasive procedures in Mexico, obtain cultures and perform antimicrobial susceptibility testing to guide treatment.
- **Immediately report any CRPA surgical site infections in patients with a history of invasive procedures in Tijuana, Mexico to your local health department or by calling 1-877-PA-HEALTH.**
- **Save any potential CRPA isolates from patients with a history of invasive procedures in Tijuana, Mexico for additional testing at the state public health laboratory. Please coordinate specimen shipment with your health department.**

Additional information:

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/alert/drug-resistant-infections-mexico>

<https://www.cdc.gov/hai/outbreaks/pseudomonas-aeruginosa.html>

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

This information is current as of February 27, 2019, but may be modified in the future. We will continue to post updated information regarding the most common questions about this subject.