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*\*NOTICE: This health alert provides written guidance for health care professionals and others who may need to take action to prevent or control a notifiable condition. It is not intended to provide guidance for the general public.*

## Communicable Disease Update: *Candida auris*

### Actions Requested:

- 1) **Save the date:** Thurston County Public Health and Social Services is hosting a Zoom webinar to share infection prevention information for C.auris in acute healthcare and long-term care settings and answer questions on:
  - Apr 24, 2024, 02:00 – 03:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada) via Zoom.
  - **Register in advance for this meeting:**  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/9tZ0lcu2tqT4iE9ExNo-wXReL92UxXAur0POJ>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.
- 2) Identify high-risk exposures in patients and consider C. auris screening in all newly admitted patients at high-risk for C. auris acquisition, including those who have had close contact in a healthcare setting with someone diagnosed with a C. auris infection or colonization. Close contact may include:
  - Sharing a room, bathroom, or patient care equipment
  - Being cared for by the same healthcare staff
  - Staying in a room near a person with C. auris
  - Direct admission from a ventilator-capable skilled nursing facility or a long-term acute care hospital
  - Colonization or infection with a CPO
  - An overnight stay in the prior year in a healthcare facility outside the United States or in a [region of the United States with a high burden of C. auris cases](#)
- 3) Ensure adherence to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [recommendations for infection control](#) for patients with suspected or confirmed C. auris, including immediately:
  - Placing patients infected or colonized with C. auris on Transmission-Based Precautions and, whenever possible, in a single room.
  - Making sure gowns and gloves are accessible and used appropriately. Reinforcing hand hygiene.
  - Ensure appropriate cleaning and disinfection, using an [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) List P \(or List K\) product](#).
- 4) Be aware that C. auris can be [misidentified through commercial laboratory testing](#) and specific technology is needed for correct identification. Report any suspected or confirmed C. auris

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cases or outbreaks to Thurston County Public Health and Social Services within 24 hours at (360) 786-5470 during business hours or after hours by calling 1-800-986-9050.

- 5) No-cost testing for C.auris is available through the Washington State Public Health Lab. If you would like to request testing materials, please contact Thurston County Public Health and Social Services at (360) 867-2610.
- 6) When transferring patients between facilities consider using the CDC Inter-Facility Infection Control **Transfer Form** [Inter-Facility Infection Control Transfer Form \(PDF\)](#) to assist in communication between facilities during transfer of care.
- 7) Consider using one of the C.auris toolkits included in this CD Update if you have a patient or resident that tests positive for C.auris to prevent spread within your facility. Please contact Thurston County Public Health and Social Services Communicable Disease team at 360-867-2610

## Background:

Candida auris is an emerging, often multidrug resistant, yeast first identified in Japan in 2009. It can cause invasive healthcare-associated infections with high mortality. C. auris was first reported in Washington in 2023 and since January 2024 has been detected in patients in several healthcare facilities and counties. As has occurred in many US states, C. auris may continue to spread among highly vulnerable patients in high acuity long term care facilities (for example, sites caring for patients needing long term ventilator support). Facilities can prevent transmission by strengthening infection prevention programs and auditing practices.

## Resources:

### Reporting

- [Candida auris Case Definition \(PDF\) WA DOH](#)
- [Candida auris Reporting Form \(PDF\) WA DOH](#)
- [Candida auris Guideline \(PDF\) WA DOH](#)

### Infection Preventionists

- [Candida auris Fact Sheet for Infection Preventionists \(CDC\)](#)
- [General information on Candida auris from CDC](#)
- [Candida auris: Working together to prevent spread in your healthcare facility](#)
- [Inter-Facility Infection Control Transfer Form \(PDF\)](#)
- [Notification of Multidrug Resistant Organism Cluster \(Word\)](#)
- [What to do if you identify a targeted multidrug resistant organism in your facility \(PDF\)](#)

### Screening Patients

- [Multi-Drug Resistant Organism Quick Reference Guide and Job Aid Combined \(PDF\)](#)
- [Example Verbal Consent for Candida auris Screening \(CDC\)](#)
- [Candida auris Testing Fact Sheet for Patients \(CDC\) \(Spanish version\)](#)

### Laboratories

- [Candida auris Fact Sheet for Laboratory Staff \(CDC\)](#)
- [Laboratory Identification of Candida auris](#)

# COMMUNICABLE DISEASE UPDATE

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION SECTION  
THURSTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
412 LILLY RD NE  
OLYMPIA, WA, 98506-5132  
DISEASE REPORTING: (360)786-5470  
[WWW.THURSTONCOUNTYWA.GOV/PHSS](http://WWW.THURSTONCOUNTYWA.GOV/PHSS)



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## THANK YOU FOR REPORTING

TO REPORT A NOTIFIABLE CONDITION IN THURSTON COUNTY	
Voice mail for reporting <b>non-immediately reportable conditions (24 hours a day):</b> <a href="http://thurstoncountywa.gov">Reporting a Notifiable Condition (thurstoncountywa.gov)</a>	Phone: <b>360-786-5470</b> Fax: 360-867-2601
<b>Day time immediately reportable conditions</b> – Calls are answered during business hours Monday-Friday 8am-5pm (excluding holidays) and routed to the appropriate communicable disease team member.	Phone: 360-867-2610 Secure eFax: 1-833-418-1916
<b>After hours immediately and 24-hour reportable conditions or a public health emergency</b>	Call 1-800-986-9050
No one is available with Thurston County Public Health and condition is <b>immediately notifiable or a public health emergency</b>	Call 1-877-539-4344

Communicable Disease Updates are posted online at: [Communicable Disease Updates \(thurstoncountywa.gov\)](http://thurstoncountywa.gov)