



# Acinetobacter

## What is Acinetobacter?

Acinetobacter is a group of bacteria that are usually found in the environment, like in soil and water. It can also be found on the skin of healthy people, including health care personnel. The most common type is *Acinetobacter baumannii* that causes most human infections. Outbreaks typically occur in intensive care units and health care settings with very ill patients. Acinetobacter infections rarely occur outside of the health care setting.

## How is Acinetobacter spread?

Acinetobacter is spread through person to person contact, contact with contaminated surfaces, and environmental exposure. The people most likely to become infected are people with weakened immune systems, chronic lung disease, or diabetes. People who are hospitalized for long periods of time, those who are very ill on a ventilator, or those who have open wounds are also at increased risk of an Acinetobacter infection.

## How is the spread of Acinetobacter prevented?

Acinetobacter can live on the skin and survive in the environment for several days. It is important to practice good hand washing techniques and environmental cleaning.

## Symptoms of Acinetobacter:

- Acinetobacter causes a number of illnesses including pneumonia, blood infections, or wound infections.
- The symptoms vary depending on the illness.
- Acinetobacter can also live in a person without causing symptoms, especially in a tracheotomy or open wound.

## How is the Acinetobacter treated?

Acinetobacter is often resistant to many common antibiotics. Decisions regarding how to treat the infection are done on a case by case basis by a healthcare professional.

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