

hand hygiene

# From the Environment to Hospitals, This Emerging Pathogen Boasts Resistance to Multiple Antibiotics

**Y**ou don't want me creeping around your hospital room, that's for sure!

I am a gram-negative bacterium found commonly in the environment. However, I am known to lurk, form biofilms, and cause trouble when I find a humid surface to settle in. Tubes used in mechanical ventilation, IV lines, indwelling urinary catheters, and endoscopes are quite cozy! I also frequent medical solutions, such as saline rinses and humidifier water.

In healthy individuals, I'm not much of a threat. But I can cause serious infections in an immunocompromised host. How fitting then that those populations are the ones most likely to be hospitalized or receiving medical care.

A growing source of latent pulmonary infections, I mimic the symptoms of bacterial pneumonia—fever, cough, mucus, shortness of breath, and chest pain. I can also cause blood infections, with symptoms that may include fever, rapid heart rate, low blood pressure, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and confusion.

But I don't discriminate. I've been responsible for endocarditis, mastoiditis, peritonitis, meningitis, and cellulitis, among other infections.

I give those other healthcare-associated pathogens a run for their money, especially in the intensive care unit, where I contribute substantially to morbidity and mortality in the immunocompromised.

To make matters worse (for you, but better me), I'm multidrug-resistant. I have been found to be, in some cases, inherently resistant to multiple classes of antibiotics, including cephalosporins, carbapenems, and aminoglycosides.

Since I was first isolated in 1943, I've gone by many names, but the tongue-twister of a moniker I go by now is here to stay.



**What's Bugging You?**

Have an idea for our Bug of the Month? By all means, tell us. We're also always looking for other story ideas to make *Infection Control Today*® required reading for those on the frontlines of healthcare. Contact Associate Editorial Director Alexandra Ward at [award@mjh Lifesciences.com](mailto:award@mjh Lifesciences.com).

Who am I? 

*Stenotrophomonas maltophilia*

## - Have you missed any mysteries? Check out more Bug of the Month stories online! -



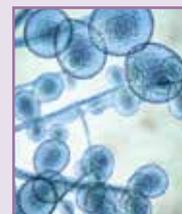
**From Turkey to Turtles, This Outbreak-Prone Bacteria Sickens Thousands**

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**I'm a Seasonal Scourge That Sickens Millions**

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**I'm a Nightmare for Healthcare Facilities and I'm on the Rise**

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