

Frequently Asked Questions for Health Departments Regarding Case Tracking of Invasive Nontuberculous Mycobacterium Infections Following Cardiac Surgery with Exposure to Heater-cooler devices.

Q: CDC's October 2016 Health Alert advises health departments to track reports from healthcare facilities about potential infections associated with heater-cooler devices. What information should be collected about these infections? Should infections be reported to the CDC?

A: Health departments should consider collecting information from healthcare facilities on any patients with invasive nontuberculous mycobacterium (NTM) infections following cardiac surgery with exposure to heater-cooler devices. Invasive NTM infection refers to an NTM-positive specimen from a normally sterile body site (such as blood, bone marrow, bone, spinal fluid, abdominal or pleural fluid), from skin, soft tissue, or drainage from a wound or abscess, or from lymph nodes. Data elements about patients with NTM infection that may be useful to obtain include information regarding **demographics** (e.g., age, sex, county/state of residence), **diagnosis** (e.g., type and location of NTM-positive specimen, NTM species, date of positive culture, date of symptom onset, clinical manifestation), **exposure history** (e.g., date of surgery with heater-cooler device exposure, type of surgical procedure, hospital where surgery was performed, heater-cooler device make/model/year of manufacture, implantation of prosthetic device during surgery, any risk mitigation strategies utilized in the hospital, such as moving the device outside of the operating room, if heater-cooler device has tested positive for NTM), and **outcome** (e.g., death, treatment success or failure).

Health departments should encourage hospitals to report all cases to the FDA via MedWatch:

<http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch/HowToReport/DownloadForms/default.htm>.

Reporting of infections to CDC is voluntary. Health departments can share information regarding heater-cooler device-associated infections (absent patient identifying information) with CDC via email to heatercoolerunits@cdc.gov. Health departments may wish to review CDC/Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion Response and Outbreak Consultation Guidance which is available at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/hai/pdfs/outbreaks/DHQP-Response-and-Outbreak-Consultation-Guidance.pdf>.