

HOW CAN YOU HELP ?

1. **WASH YOUR HANDS** often and well.
2. Ask your doctor or nurse any questions you may have.
3. If you are admitted again to this hospital or to any other health care centre, tell the staff that you had VRE in the past.
4. Remind anyone caring for you to **wash their hands** and use gloves and gowns before and after contact.

WASH



GLOVE



GOWN



FOR PATIENTS GOING TO NURSING HOMES

Your VRE status should not be a reason to be denied admittance to any long term care facility.

FOR PATIENTS RETURNING HOME:

Patients sometimes get rid of VRE on their own as their bodies get healthier and they are taken off of antibiotics. VRE poses little risk to healthy people. Even though it is a very hardy germ, it is easy to control through good handwashing and the proper use of disinfectants. Your help in controlling the spread of this bacteria is appreciated.

- Wash your hands well
 - before making any food
 - after using the toilet
- Regular laundry
- No special cleaning of furniture or items (dishes, etc) required.
- If you share a bathroom, clean the toilet and sink regularly (at least weekly) with a germicidal cleanser.

Patient Information Pamphlet

VRE (Vancomycin-Resistant Enterococcus)



Bacteria are normally found in our body. These normal bacteria do not harm us and are needed by the body to keep our body healthy. One of your lab results, however, shows that you are carrying a bacteria that is resistant to many of the usual antibiotics. To prevent the spread of this bacteria in the acute care setting, especially those already weak from being sick, the staff will be using special precautions.

WHAT IS VRE?

(Vancomycin-Resistant Enterococcus)

Enterococcus is a germ usually found in the lower intestinal tract and, in females, in the genital tract. Almost all Enterococci are sensitive to vancomycin. This particular strain of Enterococcus “VRE” has, however, mutated and is now resistant to vancomycin (an antibiotic used to treat infections).

WILL VRE MAKE ME SICK ?

Some people may only be “colonized” with the germ, which means that the germ is there but it is not making them sick. Other people may be “infected” which means they have the germ and it is making them sick with fever.

HOW IS IT TREATED ?

Some VRE can be treated with antibiotics if the patient is infected. Often, if the patient is colonized, he or she is not treated with drugs at all. This decision will be made by your physician. In either case, you will be put under “CONTACT (enhanced) PRECAUTIONS” while you are in the hospital.

WHAT ARE “CONTACT (enhanced) PRECAUTIONS ?

1. You will need to stay in your room at all times.
2. A precaution instruction sign will be placed on your door to alert staff and visitors.
3. Gloves **must** be worn by everyone who comes into your room. Gowns will be worn when it is deemed appropriate to do so. This includes all staff and visitors. It also includes any staff members who are involved with procedures done to you outside of your room.
4. All persons going in and out of your room must wash their hands (especially after removing protective gloves).
5. If you must leave your room, you must first wash your hands & put on a **clean** gown.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR FAMILY & FRIENDS ?

They are not restricted from visiting you but they **must** follow the “CONTACT (enhanced) PRECAUTIONS” outlined above. If they are visiting others in the hospital, please ask them to **visit you last**.

ARE FAMILIES AT RISK ?

NO.....these precautions are to help prevent the spread of the germ to very sick hospitalized patients. VRE is not harmful to healthy people but can cause problems for those who are seriously ill.

WHO GETS VRE ?

- people with weak immune systems
- people who have previously received several antibiotics
- people who have been in the hospital for a long time
- people who have been in and out of any health care setting before
- people who have had many procedures done

