

CARE IN YOUR HOME

What will happen when I go home?

- Good handwashing, good personal hygiene and good housekeeping are important and should always be done to maintain good health. These practices will help prevent the spread of VRE to other persons in your home.
- Always tell your doctor or other healthcare providers if you are VRE positive. This helps prevent the spread to others and helps your doctor choose the right antibiotics, if necessary.

House Cleaning

- * No special cleaning of clothing, furniture or items (e.g. dishes) is required.
- * Clean the toilet and sink weekly with a cleanser that reads “disinfectant” on the label. Disinfectants need enough time to kill VRE; therefore, wet surfaces with your disinfectant and allow to air dry.

Handwashing

- * Wash your hands before making any food and before eating. This practice should be followed by everyone in your house.
- * Wash your hands after using the washroom.
- * Everyone who might help you with using the washroom or with your personal hygiene should wash their hands after contact with you.

Why Clean your hands?

- Even if your hands look clean, they may carry harmful germs. In order to stop the spread of these germs, you must clean your hands.

How to clean hands properly?

Soap and Water

- ◆ Wet hands under warm running water, apply soap and lather.
- ◆ Using friction cover all surfaces of hands including the palm and back of hands, fingertips, nail beds, between fingers and thumbs for a minimum of 20 seconds; rinse with water.
- ◆ Dry hands with paper towel. Use a new paper towel to turn off taps.

Alcohol Hand Sanitizer

- ◆ Apply 2 pumps of alcohol to hands
- ◆ Rub hands together covering all surfaces of the hand as listed above until hands are completely dry.



Five Hills Health Region

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Vancomycin Resistant Enterococcus (VRE)

Five Hills Health Region
Regional Infection Prevention &
Control Department



**Information for
Patients / Residents
and Visitors**

Vancomycin Resistant Enterococcus (VRE)

What is VRE?

- Enterococci are bacteria that are normally present in the intestinal tract of most humans. Vancomycin is an antibiotic used to treat infections caused by this bacteria.
- Some Enterococci are no longer killed by Vancomycin and they are called Vancomycin Resistant Enterococci or VRE.
- If a person has an infection caused by VRE it may be more difficult to treat.

How is VRE Spread?

- VRE is spread through contact with someone who has VRE. If caregivers don't wash their hands, then they can spread it to the next person they care for.
 - VRE can also spread by touching surfaces (e.g. toilet seats, bedpans, door handles etc) that have come in contact with a person who has VRE.
- Therefore, washing your hands well and often is the best way to prevent the spread of VRE.***

What happens if you have VRE and you are admitted into a Healthcare Facility?

In a healthcare facility, patients who have VRE will be placed on isolation to prevent the spread of the bacteria to other patients. Isolation will involve the following:

- You will need to remain in your room for the duration of your hospital stay. You are allowed out of your room for essential purposes only (i.e. medical tests and treatments). You will be required to wash your hands, wear a gown and gloves before exiting the room.
- A sign will be placed on your door to remind staff and visitors about the additional precautions to be used before entering and exiting your room.
- Healthcare workers are required to wear gowns and gloves while in your room. This will help prevent the spread of VRE to other patients.
- Visitors are also required to wear a gown and gloves while in your room. This will help to prevent the spread of VRE.
- Hands can be cleaned by washing with soap and water or by rubbing hands with an alcohol hand sanitizer.

It is very important for staff and visitors to wash their hands before entering and exiting your room.

Can my family or visitors get VRE?

- If family and visitors follow the instructions on the Additional Precautions sign posted on your door, the risk of acquiring VRE is minimal.

Will VRE go away?

- Many people with VRE get rid of the bacteria on their own after a period of time. Sometimes people with VRE require treatment with antibiotics if it is causing an infection.
- Even if you no longer test positive for VRE we will continue to test you every-time you are admitted into the hospital in order to protect other patients / residents / visitors and staff.
- There are instances when the VRE test result will revert back to positive due to increased risk factors or medication use.

Do not be shy about reminding everyone to wash their hands