

### **WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN I LEAVE THE HOSPITAL?**

- You can return to your normal routine
- Good handwashing by everyone in the house is important
- Avoid sharing personal objects such as towels, washcloths and razors.
- Laundry and dishes can be done as usual
- No special cleaning is required

### **HOW CAN I HELP?**

- If you go to another doctor or hospital please tell them you were on Special Precautions for VRE
- Take antibiotics until they are all gone

### **HAND HYGIENE**

Special care must be paid to **hand hygiene** as it is the best way to prevent the spread of germs. **Good hand hygiene includes these steps:**

#### **Alcohol-Based Hand Rub**

- Apply to palm of one hand
- Rub hands together, covering all of hands and fingers
- Rub until hands feel dry
- If hands are visibly dirty you must wash them before using Alcohol Based Hand Rub

#### **Hand Washing**

- Use warm running water and soap
- Spend at least **15-30** seconds lathering and washing hands
- Rub hands together, paying attention to finger tips, around rings and thumbs
- Rinse thoroughly
- Dry with paper towel and turn off tap with paper towel
- Dispose of paper towel in the garbage.

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## **VANCOMYCIN RESISTANT ENTEROCOCCUS (VRE)**

INFECTION PREVENTION  
& CONTROL PROGRAM

## **WHAT IS VANCOMYCIN RESISTANT ENTEROCOCCUS (VRE)?**

*Enterococcus* is a germ that lives in most people's bowels. Vancomycin resistant *enterococcus* (VRE) is the same germ, but it is a strain that has developed resistance to the antibiotic Vancomycin.

## **DO ALL PEOPLE WITH VRE BECOME SICK?**

No, these germs can sometimes cause infections but most people who acquire VRE only carry it in their bowel and never become sick.

In some people, VRE can cause serious infections such as urinary tract infection, wound infections or blood infections. Infections may require special antibiotics.

## **ARE CERTAIN PEOPLE AT RISK OF GETTING VRE?**

People most likely to get VRE are those who:

- Are seriously ill
- Are hospitalized for a long time
- Have taken many antibiotics

## **HOW IS VRE SPREAD?**

VRE is usually passed to others by direct contact with stool, urine or blood. It can also be spread on the hands and from contaminated environmental surfaces.

## **WHY ARE CONTACT PRECAUTIONS NECESSARY?**

To prevent the spread to other patients in the hospital.

## **HOW CAN WE STOP THE SPREAD?**

Contact Precautions will be taken while you are in hospital.

- A sign will be posted on your door, you may be required to stay in your room.
- Before you leave your room clean your hands.
- Do not visit other inpatient units.
- Do not visit the unit kitchen area.
- Staff and visitors will wear gown/gloves when providing direct care
- All staff and visitors must clean their hands when they enter or leave your room
- Items brought into your room must stay in the room. VRE can live on objects in the room so it is important to clean items before they are taken out of the room.
- A note will be made on your electronic patient chart that you require Contact Precautions.

## **CAN MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS COME TO VISIT?**

**Yes. Things they should do:**

- Check with the nurse before entering your room
  - Clean their hands when they enter and when they leave your room
  - Follow the directions on the sign
  - Check with staff before bringing any items, including food, into or out of your room
  - Ask staff for items from the kitchen and utility room
  - Wear gown and gloves if they are helping with your direct care
  - Always remove gowns and gloves before leaving your room. Gloves do not substitute for cleaning your hands. Always clean your hands after removing gloves.
- \* If visiting other patients schedule their visit with you last before leaving the hospital.