

What will Happen at Home?

If you have VRE at the time of discharge from hospital, the chance of spreading the bug to your family is small.

We do recommend that you and everyone who might help you with your personal hygiene wash their hands well and frequently.

There is no need for special cleaning of furniture or other items in the home. Clothing may be laundered in the usual manner.

Always tell your physician and other health care providers that you have VRE.

If you or your family have questions or concerns, please ask your doctor or nurse.

They can contact Infection Prevention and Control for more information. We thank you for your cooperation.

Good hand washing is the most important way for everyone to prevent the spread of VRE

Handwashing



Always Wash Your Hands

- before and after touching food
- after using the washroom
- after sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose
- after touching pets or handling garbage
- after outdoor activities

TORONTO Public Health

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*Vancomycin -
Resistant
Enterococci
(VRE)*

Patient and Visitor Information

at St. Joseph's Health Centre, Toronto

Infection Prevention & Control 2010

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Vancomycin - Resistant Enterococci (VRE)

What is VRE?

Enterococci are bacteria (“bugs”) that are part of the normal human bowel. All normal bugs can cause infection if they are given an opportunity - for example, moving from their usual home onto a surgical incision or drain.

Certain strains of the Enterococci bug have learned how to survive even with the use of antibiotics. This is called antibiotic resistance. One such strain has become resistant to the antibiotic called Vancomycin.

How is VRE Spread?

VRE is spread from person to person by contact, usually on the hands or by touching contaminated equipment or objects.

A person carrying the VRE bug can

shed the bug in their stool. If the carrier of this bug does not wash their hands well, they may spread the bug from their hands to other objects.

VRE can live on hands, and for weeks on places such as toilet seats, taps, door handles, bedrails, furniture, and bedpans. With proper use of disinfectants and good hand washing, VRE can be killed.

How can I Catch VRE?

A person in the hospital for a long time or taking antibiotics is at higher risk of developing VRE.

If you touch dirty objects, your hands may also pick up the bug. The bug can enter your body if you put something in your mouth using unwashed hands. That is why it is important that everyone, including

hospital staff, patients and visitors wash their hands well and often. A swab near the rectum can tell if you are carrying VRE.

What Special Precautions are Required for VRE?

Precautions are taken to prevent spread to other patients. If you have VRE, you would be moved to a single room.

People caring for you will wear a gown and gloves to prevent carrying the bug to other patients. Family and visitors may also be required to wear a gown and gloves while in your room.

Everyone who enters or leaves your room must clean their hands well. A sign will be placed on your door to remind others who enter your room about the special precautions.