



Information for You from Your Health Care Team

What is Vancomycin Resistant Enterococci (VRE)?

Enterococci is a common type of germ called a bacteria. It is normal to find this in the intestine of humans and animals. Most of time it is normal and harmless to carry these germs in your intestines. Sometime when these germs are outside the intestines, they can cause an infection in the urine, blood, or in a wound. Vancomycin Resistant Enterococci or VRE is the name we give this germ when it has become resistant. Most patients who have VRE are not really infected with it but just carry it in their intestines.

What can be done to prevent the spread of this germ to others?

While you are in the hospital, you will be placed on Contact Precautions. This means that all those who care for you will wash their hands, use gloves and cover gowns when taking care of you. A sign will be placed outside your door to remind those who event to use these precautions. You should wash your hands carefully before you leave your room. Your family and visitors should practice good hand washing. They do not need to wear gloves or cover gowns, since they will not be caring for other patients.

What other things should I do to prevent the spread of this germ?

Hand washing is the single most important thing you can do. Hands should be washed well with soap and water and dried with clean paper towels. Hand washing should be done:

- before eating or drinking,
- before cleaning up areas with scratches or cuts,
- after using the toilet, and
- after blowing your nose.

Take a tub bath or shower often. Wash your hair every time you bathe. Do not touch or squeeze spots or pimples with your fingers. Keep wounds covered with a dressing until they appear dry. Ask your doctor to look at any wound that is draining, becomes painful, red or swollen.

Speak up if you have any questions or concerns