

When You Have VRE

(Vancomycin Resistant Enterococcus)



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Pg. 1 of 2

What is VRE?

VRE is short for **V**ancomycin **R**esistant **E**nterococcus. Enterococcus is a germ that is commonly found in the gut (bowel). “Vancomycin resistant” means these germs cannot be cured by the most common antibiotics used to treat them. The doctor may use special antibiotics to treat you.

It is possible to have this germ and not have an illness from it. You have been separated (put in isolation) to help stop the spread of these germs to other people in the hospital.

These germs are usually found in your stool (bowel movement). If the germ gets into other places in your body it can make you very ill. VRE may stay in your body for many years.

How is VRE spread to other people?

VRE is spread by touching parts of your body or things that your stool (bowel movement) or urine (pee) have touched. Any person who touches you or these things can get the germ on their hands and spread it to other people. People in good health usually will not get an infection, but some people (see the list on the back) can get very sick.

What happens if I have VRE?

- Some people have the germ without having any problems.
- If it gets into your blood, it can cause you to be very ill.

(over)

While you are in the hospital

- **Anything** that goes into your room must be disinfected or bagged before leaving your room. If you must send something home, ask the nurse how it should be done.
- When you have VRE you should wear a clean gown and wash your hands before you leave your room.
- Wash your hands when you return to your room.
- **Tell any** visitor entering your hospital room that they should:
 - Read the sign on the door.
 - Check with a nurse, if they have any questions.
 - Wash their hands, or use alcohol rub on them before leaving.



How to protect your family when you go home

- Wash your hands before and after you change your dressings.
- Put your dressings in a plastic bag. Tie off the bag and put it in the trash.
- Wash your hands after using the bathroom.
- Wash your hands before preparing any food.
- Wash your hands before eating.
- You do not need to wear gloves and gowns when you go home.

