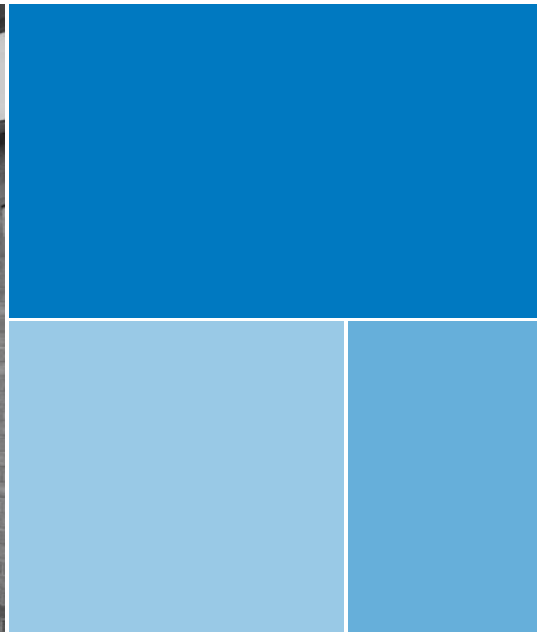


Vancomycin Resistant Enterococcus (VRE)



[Patient Information](#)

What is VRE?

VRE stands for Vancomycin Resistant Enterococcus. Enterococcus bacteria are bacteria that are commonly found in the bowels of most humans.

- VRE bacteria are resistant to some antibiotics (the glycopeptide family) used to treat infection when it occurs.
- This resistance makes VRE infection more difficult to treat.

How might VRE affect me?

VRE commonly causes wound infections following abdominal surgery, bacteraemia (blood poisoning) and infections of the abdomen and pelvis. VRE may occasionally cause other types of infection.

How do you get infected with VRE?

- There are two routes by which patients can contract VRE infections.
- Either directly or indirectly. For example, on the hands of patients, relatives or healthcare workers after contact with an infected patient; via equipment or the environment if they are not decontaminated after contact with another infected patient.
- Secondly, by the spread of VRE bacteria that has been present in your gut to another site on your body, where it would not usually be found.

Those most at risk:

- People in hospital are more at risk of infection because their body's defences are weakened by illness, surgery, drugs and procedures.
- Immunocompromised patients are at increased risk of VRE infection.
- Patients who have had numerous courses of antibiotics are also at increased risk of VRE infection.

- Patients at risk of VRE infection include those who have had a prolonged hospital stay or have been cared for in specialist units, such as the intensive care unit.

Due to different types of infections in hospitals, it is important that you do not visit patients in other parts of the ward or other wards in the hospital.

However it should be noted that it is possible to find VRE in the faeces of people who have never been to hospital or who have not recently had antibiotics.

How can we control the spread of VRE?

VRE cases can be controlled by restricting the use of certain antibiotics, reserving them for those patients who really need them. By recognising its presence promptly and by using strict standard precautions in the hospital setting will help limit the occurrence of VRE infections.

How do you treat VRE infection?

Despite being resistant to many of the usual antibiotics, treatment options are still available should infection occur.

If antibiotic treatment is necessary your doctor will discuss this with you.

Whilst in hospital, you may be cared for in a single room.

Will I have to stay in hospital until my VRE infection has cleared?

Usually if you are found to have a VRE infection you will require some treatment prior to going home. Once your infection is shown to be under control and as your condition allows, you may be discharged, whether you are still positive for VRE or not.

How will this affect my visitors?

Visitors will be requested to decontaminate their hands on entering and leaving the ward. If helping with personal care

they must wear gloves and aprons; once completed the gloves and aprons must be disposed of in the orange clinical waste bin. Hands must be decontaminated with soap and water following any period of “hands on” care.

What happens when I go home?

You may be discharged from hospital before your infection has cleared.

Usual personal hygiene and household cleaning is sufficient and restriction of activities or visitors is not necessary.

Further Information

Please see the website link below or ask to speak to an Infection Prevention Nurse.

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140714084352/>

<http://www.hpa.org.uk/Topics/InfectiousDiseases/InfectionsAZ/EnterococciSpeciesAndGRE/GeneralInformation/>

The Infection Prevention Team

Telephone: 01493 452168

Notes



James Paget University Hospitals



NHS Foundation Trust

Courtesy and respect

- A welcoming and positive attitude
 - Polite, friendly and interested in people
 - Value and respect people as individuals
- So people feel **welcome**

Attentively kind and helpful

- Look out for dignity, privacy & humanity
 - Attentive, responsive & take time to help
 - Visible presence of staff to provide care
- So people feel **cared for**

Responsive communication

- Listen to people & answer their questions
 - Keep people clearly informed
 - Involve people
- So people feel **in control**

Effective and professional

- Safe, knowledgeable and reassuring
 - Effective care / services from joined up teams
 - Organised and timely, looking to improve
- So people feel **safe**



The hospital is able to arrange for an interpreter to assist you in communicating effectively with staff during your stay through INTRAN.

If you need an interpreter or a person to sign, please let us know.

If you require a large print version of this booklet, please contact PALS on
01493 453240

Author:
Michelle Turner, IPC Nurse Specialist

© April 2015
James Paget University Hospitals NHS
Foundation Trust
Review Date: April 2018
IP 7 version 1