

Vancomycin-Resistant Enterococcus (VRE)

What is VRE?

Vancomycin is an antibiotic medicine used to treat infections. Enterococcus is a germ that lives in the intestines and in the female genital tract.

When Vancomycin does not work to treat the germs, the germs become resistant. VRE means the Vancomycin will not work to treat Enterococcus.

VRE can be spread. This happens when hands or equipment that have been in contact with VRE are not cleaned as they should be.

Who is at risk of getting a VRE infection?

Some people may be more likely to get this type of infection.

- People who have been on antibiotics for long periods of time.
- People in the hospital who are on antibiotics for a long time.
- People with weak immune systems. This includes people with cancer, those who had a recent transplant, or had a recent surgery.
- People who have had IV or urinary catheters for a long period of time.

How is VRE treated?

The germ may be tested to find an antibiotic that will work.

How can the spread of VRE be prevented?

In the hospital, be sure to ask the healthcare providers if there are any special precautions that need to be followed. Everyone should follow these guidelines. Be sure to remind others if they forget.

Everyone should:

- Clean their hands often. It is very important after using the bathroom, before making food or eating, and after contact with someone who has VRE.
- Wear clean gloves if coming in contact with body fluids of someone with VRE. Wash hands well after properly removing the gloves.
- Any area that may have been contaminated by the person with VRE should be cleaned often.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any concerns or if your child has special health care needs not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.