

## What happens when I go home?

- Healthy family members are not at risk of getting VRE so restrictions to activities or visitors are not necessary.
- If you require ongoing medical or nursing care while at home, your carer must wear gloves and continue with strict hand hygiene whenever they come into contact with your body fluids such as blood or urine. This is to prevent the staff member transmitting VRE to another patient.
- Laundry can be cleaned as normal, as can dishes and utensils. Contaminated pads or dressings can be placed in the rubbish bin.
- If you are required to attend outpatients or see your doctor, please advise the doctors and nurses that you have VRE. They can then take steps to prevent the spread of the germ to others.
- If you need to be re-admitted to hospital, you will usually be looked after in a single room with special precautions. Whilst there, your situation regarding ongoing precautions will be assessed.

## Who can I contact?

**Your medical team or the Infection Prevention and Control Unit**  
Level 3 Building C, Frankston Hospital

Phone: (03) 9784 7722  
Fax: (03) 9784 7576

**Office Hours:**  
Monday to Friday 8.00am - 4.30pm  
(Excluding Public Holidays & Weekends)

**Disclaimer:** The information contained in this brochure is intended to support not replace discussion with your doctor or health care professionals.

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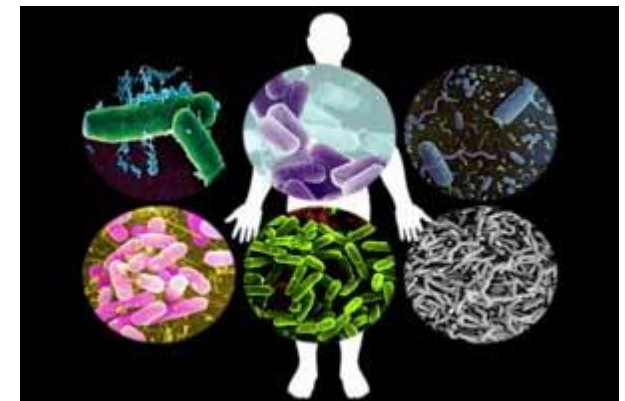
**Interpreter**



## Information for patients who have

## Vancomycin Resistant Enterococci

## (VRE)



## What is VRE?

- VRE stands for Vancomycin Resistant Enterococci.
- Enterococci are germs that normally live in the bowel. This germ can sometimes become resistant to antibiotics.
- Vancomycin is a strong antibiotic used to treat infections such as Enterococci.

## How do I know if I have VRE?

- VRE can be in your gut, urine or wound and not make you sick. This is called **colonisation** and does not require any treatment.
- **Infections** with VRE can occur in wounds, urine or blood and may cause you to have symptoms like fever or pus in a wound.

## Is treatment available?

VRE infections are difficult to treat and can result in a longer stay in hospital and different combinations of antibiotics.

## How is VRE spread?

- People can become colonised or infected with VRE, from their own germs being carried in their body from one place to another.
- Contact with VRE contaminated hands, medical equipment or the environment.
- People most likely to develop an infection with VRE are those who have been very sick in hospital or who have a chronic illness and have received lots of antibiotics.

## What precautions can I take?

- In hospital, patients with VRE infections or colonisation are often separated from other patients to help prevent the spread of germs from patient to patient.
- Hospital staff attending you will wear gowns and gloves while performing tasks in your room. They will also disinfect their hands by washing with soap or using hand rub each time they enter your room and attend to you.
- You can help prevent the spread of these germs by paying careful attention to always washing your hands carefully after going to the toilet or after touching any wounds you may have.
- Do not be shy about reminding everyone to wash their hands or use hand rub if they have entered your room.

## What about my visitors?

- Your visitors will only need to wear gloves and gowns if they are involved in your direct personal care.
- Visitors will also be asked to wash their hands when entering and leaving your room. They are also advised not to visit any other patients during the same visit.
- Please tell your visitors not to sit or lie on your bed.

## How long will I need to be separated from other patients?

- You will usually be separated in your own room from other patients while you are in hospital.
- You are able to leave your room but you should always wash your hands before leaving and after returning.
- VRE can be spread on contaminated surfaces.

## Can I transfer to other healthcare facilities?

- Transfer to other healthcare facilities can still occur if you are colonised or infected with VRE. We just need to let them know before you are transferred.
- If you are being transferred to Rehabilitation Centres and Long-Term Care Facilities they may have more relaxed precaution measures as patients there are usually less sick than those in acute care hospitals.

