

What to do at home

In general, healthy individuals, including children and pregnant women, do not need to worry about the presence of this bacterium.

- ◆ You and your close contacts should wash your hands frequently throughout the day, especially after using the toilet, before preparing or eating food, and after sneezing or blowing your nose.
- ◆ Take regular baths or showers and use your own towel.
- ◆ Weekly cleaning and disinfection of the toilet, bathtub, and shower are recommended using regular household cleaning products.
- ◆ No special precautions are needed for dishes. Changing your bedding weekly is recommended.
- ◆ Inform your doctor or nurse if you are a carrier of VRE when you visit :
 - a hospital;
 - a local community service centre (CLSC);
 - a doctor's office;
 - a medical clinic.

LE CISSS DES LAURENTIDES
complice de votre santé

Vancomycin-Resistant Enterococcus (VRE)



Information for patients, residents and their loved ones



Infection Prevention and Control Service
Service de prévention et contrôle des infections
Direction générale adjointe
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Centre intégré
de santé
et de services sociaux
des Laurentides

Québec 

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PLUS DE 100 INSTALLATIONS
EN SANTÉ ET SERVICES SOCIAUX

Québec 

The results of a laboratory test show that you are a carrier of a bacterium called Vancomycin-Resistant Enterococcus (VRE)

What is VRE?

Enterococci are bacteria that are usually found in people's intestines and feces. Generally, enterococci do not cause infections in healthy individuals. Sometimes they can cause urinary tract infections, wound infections, and, less commonly, blood infections.

VRE are enterococci that have developed resistance to several antibiotics, including vancomycin. VRE do not cause more infections than other enterococci, but they may require more difficult and prolonged treatment.

How is this bacterium transmitted?

VRE can be transmitted from a carrier to a non-carrier through close contact, contaminated healthcare equipment, or poorly washed hands. The presence of VRE is identified through a stool sample or rectal screening.

VRE can remain in the feces for several weeks or even months. Therefore, individuals who are carriers may still carry the bacteria at the time of a new hospital admission.

What is the difference between colonization and infection?

Colonization occurs when the bacterium is present without any signs or symptoms of illness. Infection, on the other hand, occurs when the bacterium penetrates an individual's defence system and causes an illness (fever, redness, pain, discharge, urinary symptoms, etc.) requiring treatment with antibiotics.

How long will I be a carrier of this bacterium?

The duration can vary from person to person. The carrier's condition will be reassessed during each hospitalization by the Infection Prevention and Control Service.

What does this mean for me?

During your stay in a healthcare facility, certain measures must be taken in order to protect others, such as :

- ◆ A sign indicating "Contact Precautions" will be posted on the door to your room.
 - Staff and visitors will take the necessary precautions when entering your room. Wearing gloves and a protective gown is mandatory in a hospital or based on risk in other healthcare settings. Your visitors should not use the toilet in your room.
- ◆ You should remain in your room (in a hospital).
- ◆ If you need to leave your room, you should follow these recommendations :
 - Always clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before leaving your room and upon returning.
 - Wear clean clothes.
 - Follow the instructions given by the staff.



Why are precautions necessary in healthcare settings?

Precautions are necessary to prevent the bacteria from spreading to others, especially those who are weakened by illness and therefore at a higher risk of complications.