



Patient Guide: Multidrug-Resistant Organisms

We care about your health and strive to provide excellent care. **Multidrug-Resistant Organisms (MDROs)** can cause infections that are difficult to treat. This brochure will help you to understand MDROs and the measures we are taking to prevent infections. You will also find things that you can do to help prevent infections.

What is a MDRO?

A MDRO is a germ that has become resistant to one or more classes of antibiotics. This means that infections caused by an MDRO are harder to treat with antibiotics. MDROs are getting to be more common, but there are ways to prevent these germs from spreading and ways to prevent new drug-resistant germs from emerging.

Hand Hygiene is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of infections!

How to practice hand hygiene:

You should use soap and water when hands are visibly dirty, after you use the restroom, and before eating or touching food.

To clean your hands with soap and water:

- Wet hands with warm water.
- Apply soap and rub together for at least 15 seconds.
- Make sure you rub your palms, fingernails, in between fingers, and the backs of your hands.
- Rinse and dry.
- If you are in a public restroom, use a clean paper towel to turn the water off.

Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are another great way to clean your hands. Use them when your hands do not look dirty.

- Rub sanitizer all over your hands, under your nails and between your fingers until your hands are dry.

You should practice hand hygiene every time you leave your room, and remind staff and visitors to practice hand hygiene when they enter and exit your room.

Get Vaccinated

VHSO employees are offered a number of vaccines to prevent illness, which keeps our staff healthy and lowers the risk of spreading infections to you. Vaccines are also available to you: If you are at risk for developing pneumonia we will offer a pneumococcal vaccine, and you can get an influenza vaccine every year during flu season to help prevent you from getting the flu.

Contain Germs

If you are found to carry a germ that could cause infections in other patients, visitors, and staff, we will place you on certain “precautions” to prevent the spread of germs to others. Staff and visitors will wear protective equipment such as gowns, gloves, and/or masks to prevent spreading germs to others in the hospital.

Remove Urinary Catheters, IVs, Other Tubes, and Drains

Urinary catheters, IVs and other tubes and drains are sometimes needed for your care, but they can also provide a route for germs to enter your body. They will be assessed and cared for routinely to help prevent infections, and will be removed when they are no longer needed for your care.

Diagnosis

Our lab can identify drug-resistant organisms taken from samples of blood, urine, stool, and wounds. X-rays and other tests can also help us to identify infections from areas in the body where it is difficult to obtain lab samples. Tell your doctor about signs and symptoms that you have, and if you know that you carry, or have had infection from a MDRO such as Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (“MRSA”) or *Clostridium difficile* (“C-diff”).

Treatment

It is not always needed to treat an infection with an antibiotic; sometimes a wound can just be cleaned out and it will heal without any need for antibiotic therapy. If you have an infection that needs to be treated with antibiotics, our laboratory can use the samples taken from blood, urine, stool, and wounds to assess which antibiotics are the best for treatment.

Antibiotics are only effective against bacteria – they do not have any effect on viruses so your doctor will not order antibiotics to treat a viral infection.