

## **PATIENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

It is important that you speak to the department you have been referred to if you have any questions (for example, about medication) before your investigation or procedure.

If you are unhappy about the service you have received and would like to talk about it or make a formal complaint, please contact Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 0300 123 1732.

If you have a complaint and you want it to be investigated, you should write direct to the Chief Executive at Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, Charles Hastings Way, Worcester WR5 1DD or contact the Patient Services Department for advice.

If you would like this information in other formats or languages please call 01905 760453 or email: [communications@worcsacute.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@worcsacute.nhs.uk).

**[www.worcsacute.nhs.uk](http://www.worcsacute.nhs.uk)**

# **VANCOMYCIN RESISTANT ENTEROCOCCI (VRE)**

**PATIENT INFORMATION**

You are reading this leaflet because you have been told that you have a germ called VRE.

You have probably recently been poorly in hospital, maybe even needing intensive care, or you may be attending the dialysis unit for treatment.

### **WHAT IS THIS GERM?**

It is a germ which occurs in hospitals and is resistant to a range of antibiotics, which makes it difficult to treat when it causes infection. Usually it does not cause infection, but lives harmlessly in the bowel or elsewhere in the body.

### **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT IN HOSPITAL?**

Because it is resistant to many of the antibiotics we use in hospital, we need to try to contain it and stop it spreading. So if we find you have it (by testing your stool) we will care for you in a single room and put in place 'isolation precautions'.

### **WILL IT AFFECT MY HEALTH?**

Most usually it will not cause you any ill effects. But it is important that we know about it so that if you get ill, we will know which antibiotic to use.

### **WILL IT GO AWAY?**

We can't really answer this question for certain, but we have seen some patients become negative.

### **CAN VRE BE CLEARED WITH ANYTHING?**

We don't know of any ways to get rid of VRE from the gut, but it seems best not to give you any unnecessary treatment for it while it is not causing you any problems. The unnecessary use of antibiotics can cause germs to become resistant to treatments.

### **WHY HAVE YOU CHOSEN TO TEST ME?**

We are screening patients who spent time on our ITU, or some patients who may have had contact with known positive patients.

### **DO I NEED TO TELL PEOPLE ABOUT IT?**

There is no need for you to tell anyone. We will tell your GP when you are discharged, and your hospital notes will be marked with an alert. If you are re-admitted, tell ward staff that they should contact us to let us know. We can then arrange for you to be admitted to a single room and checked to see if you still have the germ.

### **ARE MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS AT RISK?**

No, healthy people are not at risk. If there is anyone at home who is very unwell, perhaps undergoing chemotherapy for cancer or dialysis, please contact the Infection Prevention Department for advice. Ask your named nurse to put you in touch, or ask for extension 44744 or 33605 through the hospital switchboard.