Multi-drug resistant organisms (MDROs)

What is an MDRO?

A multi-drug resistant organism (MDRO) is a bacteria that is resistant to many antibiotics. If bacteria are "resistant" to an antibiotic it means that certain drug treatments will not work. Examples of MDROs are:

- Methicillin Resistant Staphlycoccus Aureus (MRSA)*
- Vancomycin Resistant Enterococcus (VRE)
- Extended Spectrum Beta Lactamase (ESBL)
- Klebsiella Pneumoniae Carbapenemase Producer (KPC)

A person can be either "colonized" or "infected" with an MDRO. Colonized means that a person has the bacteria present on the skin or in body openings but has no signs of infection. Infected means that a person has signs of an infection (swelling, drainage, fever).

It is important to prevent the spread of an MDRO. Infections caused by MDROs can be more difficult to treat, since there are fewer antibiotics that work against them.

How will I know if my child has an MDRO?

The doctor will order lab tests to find out if an MDRO is present. Samples of body fluids will be sent to the lab for culture.

* For Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA), please see the MRSA Patient/Family Education Material

How is an MDRO spread?

The most common way of spreading the bacteria from person to person is by contact with the hands. **Frequent hand washing is the most important way to prevent the spread of an MDRO.**

Hospital precautions

If your child has an MDRO and is in the hospital, you can expect the following in addition to our usual practices meant to stop the spread of infections:

Your child **must stay** in an isolation room, or with a roommate who has the same type of MDRO. Your child can only leave the room for certain tests and with special precautions in place.

Toys will be brought into your child's room. All items, including equipment, toys, and games, must stay in your child's room until they are cleaned by hospital workers.

Everyone, including family and visitors, must remember to **wash their hands** when **entering** and **leaving** the child's room. Hospital workers entering the room will be wearing a gown and will wash and glove their hands.

In most areas of the hospital, family members do not need to wear gowns or gloves. Workers wear them to help prevent the spread of an MDRO from one patient to another.

Your child's family and visitors should not go into other patient's rooms.

If you need linens or other materials stored outside your child's room, please ask a staff member for them. Do not go into unit storage areas.

If you have questions about the special safeguards, please ask the nurse.

What precautions should we take at home and in the community?

An MDRO infection can be picked up in the community by anyone, through skin-to-skin contact or by touching anything that a person carrying the germ has touched.

Hand hygiene is the most important thing you can do. Wash your hands with a liquid hand soap and water for at least 15 seconds, rubbing all surfaces briskly. Use paper towels to dry hands, and then use the towel to turn off the faucet. Or, use an alcohol hand sanitizer.

Do not share personal items like towels and washcloths, bars of soap, razors, or clothes.

Clean bathrooms and launder clothing, bedding, towels, and washcloths regularly.

Clean objects and surfaces shared with others, such as athletic equipment, before using.

If an MDRO infection is suspected, seek early medical treatment and follow directions closely. Tell any healthcare providers if you or any household members have or have had an MDRO. Keep infected areas covered with clean, dry bandages. Put used bandages in a covered garbage container.

Questions?

This sheet is not specific to your child, but provides general information. If you have any questions, please ask your child's doctor or nurse.

For more information, these resources may also be helpful:

Center for Disease Control
800-232-4636
www.cdc.gov

Minnesota Department of Health
651-201-5000
www.health.state.mn.us

For more reading material about this and other health topics, please call or visit the Family Resource Center library, or visit our Web site: www.childrensmn.org.

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