



**Wirral University
Teaching Hospital**
NHS Foundation Trust

**Screening for Carbapenamase
Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPE) and
Vancomycin Resistant Enterococci (VRE)**
Pre-Operative Assessment Unit
Patient Information Leaflet

You have been given this leaflet to information on two types of bacteria;

- Carbapenamase Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPE); and
- Vancomycin Resistant Enterococci (VRE).

What is CPE?

Enterobacteriaceae are bacteria (germs) that live naturally in the gut of healthy individuals. Most people will never have a problem, however, occasionally they may cause an infection which is usually easy to treat. Sometimes the bacteria may be resistant to some antibiotics which means we may have to try different antibiotics to kill the bacteria.

What is VRE?

Enterococci are another bacteria that live naturally in the gut. Enterococci are also often found in the environment. Occasionally they may cause infections. These infections are often treated with an antibiotic called Vancomycin. Sometimes enterococci become resistant to this antibiotic. This means that the antibiotic cannot kill the bacteria.

Why am I being screened?

This is a routine screening prior to you coming into hospital for your surgery and will help to identify any potential risk.

How will I be screened?

Screening involves taking a rectal swab (from the back passage), which is then sent to the laboratory. The screening is the same for both CPE and VRE.

What if I carry the germ?

CPR/VRE do not cause problems to people who are otherwise fit and well. Your operation will still proceed as normal but you may be asked to remain in a single room for the duration of your stay and staff caring for you will carry out additional infection control precautions.

Can CPE and VRE be treated?

If you are carrying the bacteria (colonised) with CPE or VRE the bacteria should not cause you any problems if you are generally fit and well. You should not need any treatment, however, if you develop an infection it will be more difficult to treat due to antibiotic resistance.

If you do have an infection your doctor will discuss treatment options with you.

How does CPE and VRE spread?

If CPE or VRE is naturally living in your gut, it can enter other parts of your body such as bladder, blood-stream or wounds and this is when infections can occur.

Both CPE and VRE can also spread from someone else who is colonised or infected. This might be through direct contact, from the hands of healthcare workers or visitors or from the environment.

What can I do to help prevent the spread of any infections?

Hand washing with soap and water is the most effective way to prevent the spread of infections in hospital.

You can help us fight infection by :

- Making sure that you and your visitors clean and dry your hands regularly, especially after using the toilet and before eating
- Cleansing hands with ward provided alcohol rub

Please feel free to ask any staff member if they have cleaned their hands if you are concerned.

This leaflet is available in large print, Braille and on tape.
Please contact 0151 604 7289 if calling from outside the
Hospital and x2761 if calling from inside the Hospital.



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