

## IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT MULTI-DRUG RESISTANT ORGANISMS

### What is a multi-drug resistant organism?

A multi-drug resistant organism (MDRO) is usually bacteria that are resistant to two or more antibiotics. Antibiotics are medications used to fight infections and kill the organisms (bacteria) that cause them. Sometimes though, the organism “learns” how to resist the antibiotic. When that happens, the illness that is caused by an infection is harder to treat.

### What are the most common organisms we see in our community?

- MRSA (*methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus*),
- VRE (*vancomycin resistant Enterococcus*),
- CDI (*Clostridium difficile*)



### What does it mean to be “colonized” versus “infected” with an MDRO?

Being colonized with an MDRO means that the organism is present in or on a body site but there are no signs or symptoms of illness. Being infected means that the organism is present in or on a body site and that you have signs or symptoms of illness.

### Can MDRO be treated?

In most cases MDRO can be treated. Usually, this means giving you stronger antibiotics than might otherwise be the case. In addition, treatment is provided to address any symptoms you may be having. Your physician will determine the best course of treatment for you.

### Can someone catch an MDRO?

Yes. That is why it is very important to prevent the spread of an MDRO from one person to another. Depending on the type of MDRO, it can be spread by touching another person or their belongings. Certain types of MDRO can also be spread through the air by coughing or touching someone’s sputum.

### If I have an MDRO, how can I protect my loved ones?

There are several things you can do to help protect others:

- Wash your hands before and after contact with other people and ask them to do the same
- You may be placed on certain precautions while you are being cared for. Family and visitors may be asked to wear gloves, gowns, and masks. Remind them to do so.
- Do not bring in personal articles or belongings from home. If you do, ask how to clean and disinfect them appropriately.



### I still have questions. What should I do?

Please don’t hesitate to ask your doctor or nurse for any additional information or for assistance in answering any questions you may have.