Multi-Drug Resistant Organisms (MDROs) **in Acute Care**

What is a MDRO?

Sometimes, germs become resistant to antibiotics. These germs are more common in countries with poor sanitation, and often come from contaminated food and water. Healthy people can carry the germ without becoming ill. It then spreads from person to person by touching unclean equipment, surfaces, and hands. Sometimes, a person picks up the germ during hospital stays.

When a person takes antibiotics, it suppresses our natural way of fighting off infection and allows this germ to grow and multiply. These germs can cause infections in the urinary tract, blood, lungs, as well as in existing wounds. People more likely to become ill if they have a chronic illness, have had recent surgery or a medical procedure, or are critically ill for other reasons.

Why are we testing people for MDRO?

We know these germs can spread to others and cause serious infections.

We test people in hospital who:

- Have had any type of health care outside of Canada in the last 12 months
- Have travelled to India, Pakistan, Vietnam, or Bangladesh in the last 12 months
- Could have come in contact with someone known to have a MDRO
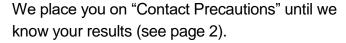
How do we test for MDROs?

The test involves a rectal swab. We put a small cotton swab into the rectum, rotate it gently, and remove it. It can take a few days for test results to come back from the laboratory.

What can you do while waiting for the results?

The best thing to do is **clean your hands often** with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.

Clean your hands:

- Before and after eating or drinking
- Before and after using the toilet
- Before leaving your room

We place you on "Contact Precautions" until we know your results (see page 2).

For people who test "negative" for MDRO

"Negative" means we did not find any MDROs in or on your body. We remove the "Contact Precautions". To protect yourself from getting an infection, continue to clean your hands often.

For people who test "positive" for MDRO

"Positive" means you have a MDRO in or on your body. You might be carrying the germ without signs of an infection or have an infection caused by a MDRO. A doctor or nurse explains the "Enhanced Contact Precautions" needed to help keep the germ from spreading to others (see page 2).

Can MDROs be treated?

If you are healthy, you do not need to be treated.

If a MDRO is causing an infection, we will treat it. Infections caused by a MDRO are harder to treat because some antibiotics no longer work or don't work as well. Your doctor chooses the best antibiotic for the germ and location of infection.

Please note: The germ can remain in your body even after the infection is gone. Always tell your doctor you have tested "positive" for a MDRO.

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In hospital while waiting for test results

We prevent the possible spread of the germ by putting you on "Contact Precautions".

Contact Precautions means:

- Stay in your room as much as possible.

- Continue to clean your hands often.

- We post an isolation sign on the door.

- Everyone who enters your room must:
    - Clean their hands before entering.
    - Put on gloves and a gown to cover clothing.
    - Remove the gown and gloves when leaving.
    - Clean their hands again.

- **Do not** use any shared or public washrooms.

- **Do not** use common areas, such as the lounge, gift shop, or cafeteria.
  You can go to other areas for treatments and tests needed for your care.

- If you must walk around, please ask your healthcare provider when and where you may walk and if any special equipment is needed.

In hospital after testing positive

We put you on "Enhanced Contact Precautions".

Enhanced Contact Precautions means:

- Continuing all of the "Contact Precautions".

- We move you to a private room.

- We limit you to using one specific washroom or commode (toilet on wheels).
  Do not share your washroom or commode with others, including your visitors.

At home after testing positive

- Wash your hands often, especially after going to the bathroom and before preparing and eating food.

- People who live with you should wash their hands often.

- **Do not** share personal care items such as towels, toothbrushes, or bar soap.

- Clean bathrooms and other frequently touched surfaces (for example, light switches, and water taps) once each day and more often if visibly soiled.

- Wash non-disposable cleaning cloths after each use.

- Keep a clean bandage on wounds that are draining fluid or pus.

- Anytime you have to return to the hospital, tell the nurse or doctor that you are a carry a MDRO germ so you can be tested again**.**

To learn more, it's good to ask

- Your family doctor

- Fraser Health Virtual Care
  Phone: 1-800-314-0999
  Live chat: fraserhealth.ca/virtualcare
  10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., 7 days a week

- HealthLinkBC
  Phone: 8-1-1 (7-1-1 TTY)
  Online: HealthLinkBC.ca

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