

## Multidrug-Resistant Organisms (MDROs)

### What are multidrug-resistant organisms ?

They are bacteria and other organisms that have developed resistance to antibiotics. The following are examples:

M.R.S.A. - methicillin/oxacillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*

V.R.E. - vancomycin-resistant enterococci

E.S.B.L.s - extended-spectrum beta-lactamases

(resistant to cephalosporins and monobactams)

P.R.S.P. - penicillin-resistant *Streptococcus pneumoniae*

*M.R.S.A. and V.R.E. are the most commonly diagnosed.*

### My doctor says I am colonized but not infected, what does that mean ?

Colonization - the organism is present in or on the body but does not cause illness.

Infection - the organism is present and causing illness.

*If you are infected, please seek medical attention for treatment.*

### How are multidrug-resistant organisms spread ?

These organisms are spread by:

- direct contact with an infected or colonized person.
- indirect contact with contaminated objects such as towels, linens, wound dressings, clothes, workout equipment, or other objects.
- use of medical equipment contaminated by an infected or colonized person.

### Are some people more susceptible than others ?

Yes. There are many risk factors including the following:

- advanced age.
- underlying diseases or conditions.
- repeated visits to the hospital.
- previous colonization by multidrug-resistant organisms.
- invasive procedures such as dialysis, urinary catheterization and the presence of invasive devices.

**How can I protect myself from contracting multidrug-resistant organisms if my family member has it ?**

Healthy people are at low risk of contracting these organisms. Caregivers should perform the following when caring for family members who are colonized or infected with multidrug-resistant organisms:

- wash their hands with soap and water after contact with the colonized or infected person and before leaving their home.
- dry their hands with disposable towels and discard or launder cloth towels after each use.
- wear disposable gloves if they come in contact with bodily fluids and wash their hands after removing the gloves.
- wash all clothes, towels, and linens of the infected or colonized person separate from other family members.
- routinely clean the person's environment especially when the environment is soiled with bodily fluids.

**For more information:**

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[www.cdc.gov/ncidod/hip/ARESIST/mrsa\\_comm\\_faq\\_print.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/hip/ARESIST/mrsa_comm_faq_print.htm)