Multi-drug resistant organisms (MDROs)

We have given you this factsheet because you have tested positive for a multi-drug resistant organism (MDRO). This factsheet explains what MDROs are, how they are treated, and how to prevent them from spreading during your stay in hospital and at home. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to a member of your healthcare team.

What are MDROs?

Multi-drug resistant organisms are bacteria (germs) that have become resistant to certain commonly-used antibiotics. This means that these bacteria can't be effectively controlled or killed by most antibiotics. An MDRO infection can be difficult to treat, because only some antibiotics will work.

MDROs can be spread from person-to-person via unwashed hands, touching contaminated equipment that has not been cleaned thoroughly, or picked up from the environment. This can happen both in the community and in hospital.

You are at an increased risk of getting an MDRO if you have:

- been a patient in a hospital abroad
- had frequent or long hospital stays
- had repeated prolonged courses of antibiotics
- had invasive procedures such as dialysis or have had tubes inserted into different body parts

If you have an MDRO colonisation

'Colonisation' means that the MDRO bacteria is present on skin, body openings or the gut but it is not causing an infection. There are no symptoms. You may not need antibiotic treatment if you are 'colonised' with an MDRO. However, colonisation can lead to infection.

If you have an MDRO infection

If you have an active MDRO infection, you will have symptoms such as fever, swelling, redness and/or pus from a wound.

MDRO infections are hard to treat because they do not respond to many antibiotics, even the most powerful ones. Your doctor will discuss your treatment with a consultant microbiologist to decide on the best method.

Preventing the spread of MDROs

If you have an MDRO or you have an infection caused by an MDRO, we will take additional precautions to reduce the risk of it spreading to other people.

We will:
- move you to a single occupancy room (isolation) for the duration of your hospital stay
- place a sign on the entrance door to your room to explain to staff and visitors any extra precautions needed
- wear a gown with long sleeves and gloves, and sometimes a mask and goggles, if we are providing any close care
- clean the room daily with a chlorine-based disinfectant (personal items should be kept to a minimum and stored in the drawers or cupboard provided to keep surfaces clear)
- clean any equipment that we take into your room with chlorine after each use (we may leave other equipment in your room for the duration of your hospital stay)
- provide you with your own commode (a chair with a hidden toilet) to use (if your isolation room is not en-suite)

When you are in isolation you should:
- not leave your room (unless we ask you to)
- not visit ward or hospital communal areas (including the cafeteria and the shops on C level)
- not visit other patients' bed areas or have contact with other patients
- not touch any wounds or medical devices (for example, urinary catheters or intravenous cannulas)
- always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water or use alcohol hand gel before meals and after going to the toilet (ask us for help if needed)

Visitors

Family and friends are welcome to visit you in hospital.

To prevent the spread of MDRO, visitors should:
- clean their hands with alcohol gel hand rub or soap and water on entering and exiting your room
- not sit or lie on your bed
- not assist or visit other patients
- not use patient toilets
- wear gloves and a long sleeve gown (if helping with personal care such as washing)

When you leave hospital

When you leave hospital, you can carry on with your usual day-to-day activities (including visiting others or having visitors).

You should maintain good personal hygiene, including washing your hands after going to the toilet, and before and after touching your wound or touching your catheter (if present). It is not necessary for your family members to wear long sleeve gowns and gloves at home.

Contact your general practitioner (GP) if you have a wound that becomes red, swollen or starts to ooze.

To prevent the spread of MDROs at home:
- everyone who helps you with your personal hygiene or toileting should wash their hands afterwards
- you should clean your hands after using the toilet, and before food preparation and eating (this will protect you and others from lots of infections, not just an MDRO)

- you should avoid touching any wounds or medical devices such as intravenous drips or catheters (if you have any)
- you should not share personal items that touch your skin, such as towels

You can continue to wash your clothes and bedding as normal with the rest of your household laundry.

Will the MDRO bacteria go away?

Bacteria can live harmlessly in the gut for long periods, so it is difficult to know when the MDRO bacteria have gone. At University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust (UHS), we would consider that you are free from an MDRO if you have had a negative MDRO test result 12 months after testing positive in the same area.

Further information

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a nurse or another member of the team caring for you.

If you are a patient at one of our hospitals and need this document translated, or in another format such as easy read, large print, Braille or audio, please telephone **0800 484 0135** or email **PFSH@uhs.nhs.uk**

For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport**

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