



Multidrug Resistant Organisms (MDRO)

Information brochure

Ziekenhuisbreed

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02 Introduction

Hospitals are increasingly facing Multidrug Resistant Organisms (MDROs). These are bacteria that are increasingly difficult to treat with antibiotics.

The hospital is taking specific measures to minimise the spread of these bacteria between patients and staff.

You can find more information about MDRO and preventive measures in this brochure.

03

What is a Multidrug Resistant Organism (MDRO)?

A bacterium is referred to as an MDRO when it is resistant to one or more of the antibiotics a doctor would typically use to treat an infection caused by that bacterium. MDRO is therefore not the name of a specific bacterium, but rather a collective term for bacteria that share the same characteristic – resistance to certain antibiotics.

There are different types of bacteria, each with its own name, that fall under the MDRO group. Some examples include MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*), VRE (Vancomycin-Resistant *Enterococci*), and CPE (Carbapenemase-Producing *Enterobacteriaceae*).

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Can you become ill from an MDRO?

Many people carry an MDRO without getting sick from it. If an MDRO is demonstrated without the person being sick from it, it is called carrier status.

We only speak of an infection when someone develops symptoms or becomes ill due to an MDRO. Patients with a weakened immune system are especially vulnerable to infections caused by these resistant bacteria. Such infections are more difficult to treat because only a limited number of antibiotics remain effective.

05 How do you get an MDRO?

You may already be carrying an MDRO before coming to hospital (for example, through contact with livestock or with people who frequently stay in care facilities). It is also possible to acquire an MDRO while in hospital.

An MDRO spreads easily through direct contact (such as via hands) or indirect contact (such as touching objects and surfaces). If the resistant bacterium is present in the respiratory tract, it can also be spread through airborne droplets – for example, by coughing or sneezing.

06 How is it determined whether you are carrying an MDRO?

When you are admitted to hospital – as well as during preoperative assessments and/or other invasive procedures – risk factors for MDRO carriage are assessed using a risk profile:

- Known carrier of an MDRO.
- Hospitalisation within the past year in a (different) domestic or foreign hospital.
- Stay in a care facility.
- Occupational contact with animals.
- Healthcare worker involved in direct patient care.

If you meet the criteria of this risk profile, an MDRO screening will be performed. This involves taking a sample using a swab from the nose, throat, and/or skin around the anus (or perineum or groin). This is painless. Other sites may also be tested, such as a wound or the insertion site of a catheter.

These screenings help detect the most important resistant bacteria.

07

What measures does the hospital take if you are carrying an MDRO?

The hospital will try to prevent the spread of this bacterium by implementing isolation measures. This means that, as an MDRO carrier, you will receive care in isolation. You will usually be admitted to a single room.

Healthcare workers will wear gloves, a gown, and a surgical mask while providing care.

More information about these measures can be found in the leaflet "Isolatiemaatregelen".

08

What measures should my visitors take?

You may still receive visitors while being cared for in isolation. An MDRO does not pose a risk to the health of your family and friends. Pregnant women and children can also visit you without any danger.

However, your visitors must disinfect their hands with hand sanitiser before leaving your room.

If they wish to visit other patients in the hospital as well, they should do so before coming to see you – your room should be their last stop.

09

How is an MDRO treated?

In addition to the usual antibiotics, there are fortunately still a (limited) number of other options that can be used to treat an infection caused by an MDRO. These antibiotics are only prescribed when truly necessary, as overuse could lead to the bacteria becoming resistant to these as well.

If you are only carrying an MDRO without showing any signs of infection, you will usually not receive treatment for it.

What precautions can you take yourself?

- Hand hygiene is the most important measure – both for yourself and for your visitors. In hospital, hands must always be disinfected using hand sanitiser. You should rub your hands with hand gel several times a day, especially when leaving your room.
- Pay daily attention to your personal hygiene. In some cases, the use of antiseptic soap may be prescribed.
- You should also care for your mouth and teeth every day. In certain situations, antiseptic mouthwashes may be recommended.
- Your clothing should be clean and, if possible, changed daily.
- In some cases, your healthcare provider may ask you to take additional precautions.

11 FAQ

Are there any risks for me and my loved ones?

For your family and other social contacts, being an MDRO carrier usually has no consequences. You can continue your daily activities without restrictions (e.g. shopping, working, going to school). Hugging or kissing your family and friends poses no risk at all.

However, people with a severely weakened immune system (e.g. those undergoing cancer treatment) may be at greater risk.

Do I need to take any special precautions at home?

Apart from practising good hand hygiene – regularly washing or disinfecting your hands – no additional precautions are necessary. Your (medical) waste or laundry does not need to be handled separately.

If you receive nursing care or physiotherapy at home, you should inform them that you are carrying an MDRO. This allows them to take appropriate precautions before coming into contact with other patients during their rounds.

Can you get rid of an MDRO?

It is possible to spontaneously clear an MDRO, but it is difficult to predict how long MDRO carriage will last. It may take months or even years.

New MDRO screenings can be performed to check whether you are still a carrier. This may happen during a future hospital admission or in preparation for planned surgery. These follow-up screenings can only be done after a certain period (depending on the type of bacterium) and if you have not taken antibiotics for at least 48 hours.

Notes

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Questions?

For questions about your treatment, you can contact the nurse or attending physician. For general questions about an MDRO, you can contact the hospital hygiene service.

hospital hygiene service (during office hours)
tel: 011 69 99 17



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