

What can I do myself to avoid the spreading of MDR bacteria?

The transmission of germs, which includes MDR bacteria, happens mostly through the hands of staff, patients, and visitors. This is why the most important hygienic measure in hospitals is repeated and thorough hand disinfection.

How do I sanitize my hands?

- A dispenser of hand disinfectant is available in every room.
- First dispose of all finger adornment such as rings or the disinfectant will not work everywhere.
- Apply disinfectant generously (the amount you can cup with one hand) onto your dry hands and rub into your hands thoroughly until your hands are dry.



Helpful advice for correct hand sanitization: imagine you are rubbing your hands with a coloured cream until not one spot of uncoloured skin is visible any more.

May I leave my room as an isolated patient with MDR bacteria?

Yes, but only after consulting the nursing staff.
The following rules apply at all times:

- Thoroughly sanitize your hands before leaving the room, after blowing your nose, and after using the toilet!
- You are not permitted to enter the common areas of the hospital (cafeteria, lounges and common rooms on the ward) and you cannot be served at the buffet on the ward.
- You are not permitted to use the public or visitor restrooms/toilets!
- No physical contact (handshakes, hugs) with other patients. You may shake hands with your family/visitors and hug them. Your visitors should also by all means thoroughly sanitize their hands when they leave your room.

For further information please address the medical staff on your ward.

INFORMATION FOR
PATIENTS AND VISITORS

Multidrug - resistant bacteria (MDR bacteria)



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What are MDR bacteria?

Bacteria are everywhere around us.

Most of them are completely harmless; many are even useful and necessary for our daily life. Countless bacteria can be found on every human being's skin and in the intestine, which are indispensable to the immune system or for digestion.

MDR bacteria belong to a very small group of very common bacteria found worldwide. Under specific conditions some of those bacteria can change in such a way that they become resistant to certain antibiotics. In these cases, they are referred to as multidrug-resistant bacteria (German abbreviation MRE).

This means that antibiotics that would normally be given to treat an infection with this kind of bacteria work only insufficiently or not at all.

The most important MDR bacteria are:

MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant **S**taphylococcus **A**ureus)
Typically found in the nose and on the skin.

MRGN (Multidrug-Resistant **G**ram-**N**egative bacteria)
Typically found in the intestines and on the skin.

For some years now the number of people who carry one or more MDR bacteria in addition to their commensal bacteria has increased.

It does not mean you are sick if you 'merely' carry an MDR bacteria on your skin or inside your nose or intestine! The mere existence is referred to as colonization with MDR bacteria. We do not refer to an infection unless the bacteria cause signs of illness. Colonization can lead to an infection only under very specific circumstances, but it doesn't have to.

Irrespective of colonization of infection:

It is important that the germ is not transmitted to other patients!

Are MDR bacteria dangerous?

The existence of MDR bacteria in **healthy people** usually poses no danger because the body's own defenses are strong enough.



However, the situation is different **in hospitals**.

Here, MDR bacteria can be dangerous to you and other patients. On the one hand, illness and certain therapies can weaken the body's own defenses. On the other hand, for example catheters that are placed in the course of an operation, or wounds, can become additional portals for germs to enter the body.

For you as a patient, it is important to know that MDR bacteria **are no more aggressive** than non-resistant bacteria. They do not cause infections more often. The significance of MDR bacteria lies in the fact that **treatment options with antibiotics are limited**. As a result, an infection can be more difficult to treat and delay the recovery process.

What is an MDR bacteria screening?

Through a specific examination (screening) we can find out whether you are colonized by an MDR bacteria without you knowing. For this, samples are taken from certain body parts (e.g. nose, groin, rectum) with a specific swab. The process is completely painless.

For reasons of patient safety it is possible that you are accommodated in a single room until the test result comes back from the laboratory. This spatial separation from other patients is a means of precaution referred to as preventive isolation. In case of negative laboratory findings, the spatial separation is lifted.

What measures are necessary in case MDR bacteria are found?

Everything needs to be done to avoid spreading MDR bacteria to other patients:

- Isolation (spatial separation from other patients, usually in a single room with own toilet)
- Hand disinfection after every use of the toilet and before leaving the room



- In certain cases, extended safety measures for the staff (protective apron, gloves, facial mask). For your visitors, these measures are normally not needed. It is enough if your visitors thoroughly sanitize their hands when leaving your room.
- In case of MRSA: If necessary, removal of the bacteria from your skin and mucous membranes with antiseptic soap, antibiotic nose cream and mouth wash.