

Vancomycin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (VRSA) Case Confirmed in Delaware

DOVER – The Division of Public Health (DPH) reported today a confirmed case of Vancomycin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (VRSA). The 67-year-old New Castle County patient with extensive underlying health conditions is being treated on an outpatient basis. The patient is expected to recover at this time. VRSA is very rare and only seen in people with significant underlying health conditions. No person-to-person transmission has ever been documented in the United States (U.S).

VRSA arises when a patient is infected with Staphylococcus aureus and the bacteria then mutate. The mutation (change) makes the bacteria resistant to Vancomycin, an antibiotic used to treat Staphylococcus aureus infections. VRSA infections are still treated with other antibiotics, but are relatively difficult to treat because the bacteria are also resistant to several other antibiotics, including the antibiotics in the penicillin and cephalosporin families. A few existing factors predispose patients to VRSA infection, including:

- Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (better known as “MRSA”) and Vancomycin-resistant enterococcal (VRE) infections or colonization
- Underlying conditions (such as chronic skin ulcers and diabetes)
- Previous treatment with Vancomycin, an antibiotic

On March 10, 2015, lab tests by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provided confirmation of VRSA. The Delaware case represents only the 14th confirmed case of VRSA ever to be reported in this country. DPH previously

reported three cases of VRSA—two in 2010 and one in 2012. At this time, DPH has no cause to believe there is a link between the cases.

Out of an excess of caution, the DPH Office of Infectious Disease Epidemiology is investigating this case and possible contacts per CDC recommendation. Given that no known cases of person-to-person transmission have ever occurred in the U.S., the chance of additional cases related to this one are low.

The CDC has provided extensive information on VRSA, including frequently asked questions (FAQs), [available here](#). Or, for questions about VRSA, contact the DPH Office of Infectious Disease Epidemiology at 888-295-5156.

A person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind, or speech-disabled can call the DPH phone number above by using TTY services. Dial 7-1-1 or 800-232-5460 to type your conversation to a relay operator, who reads your conversation to a hearing person at DPH. The relay operator types the hearing person's spoken words back to the TTY user. To learn more about TTY availability in Delaware, visit delawarerelay.com .

Delaware Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of the lives of Delaware's citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations. DPH, a division of DHSS, urges Delawareans to make healthier choices with the 5-2-1 Almost None campaign: eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day, have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time each day (includes TV, computer, gaming), get 1 or more hours of physical activity each day, drink almost no sugary beverages.

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