

## **Vancomycin-intermediate *Staphylococcus aureus* (VISA) Vancomycin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (VRSA)**

### **Definition:**

VISA and VRSA are specific types of *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria that have developed resistance to the antibiotic vancomycin. *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria are commonly found on the skin and in the nose of about 30% of people. Most of the time these staph bacteria do not cause harm. Sometime though, they can cause serious infections in the blood, respiratory tract, bone and heart valves.

### **Signs and symptoms:**

There are no unique signs or symptoms for VISA/VRSA infections. Instead, watch for general signs and symptoms of infection (e.g. fever, chills, aches, nausea, vomiting, weakness). VISA or VRSA infections can present as blood, respiratory, urinary, and/or wound infections.

### **Transmission:**

These bacteria are usually spread from person to person through contact with infected or colonized people, particularly by coming into contact with wounds. Persons most at risk of acquiring VISA or VRSA infections are those with an underlying medical condition such as such as diabetes and kidney disease.

### **Diagnosis:**

VISA and VRSA are diagnosed in the laboratory from a culture of a body fluid such as blood or pus.

### **Role of the School Nurse:**

#### **Prevention**

- Promote proper hand washing to reduce risk of contact transmission.

#### **Treatment Recommendations**

- If an adult or child has signs or symptoms of an infection, they should be encouraged to seek medical attention.

#### **Exclusions**

- Students with any type of VISA or VRSA wound infection need to be excluded from attending school/daycare until drainage from wound or skin and soft tissue is contained and maintained in a clean, dry bandage.
- Restrict a student from activities that could result in the infected area being touched by others or becoming exposed, wet, soiled or otherwise compromised.

### **Reporting Requirements**

Laboratory confirmation is necessary for reporting of this infectious disease. The Maine CDC's 24-hour disease reporting line is 1-800-821-5821.

### **Resources:**

- Maine CDC – VISA/VRSA website: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/shm/index.shtml>
- Federal CDC – VISA/VRSA website: [http://www.cdc.gov/HAI/organisms/visa\\_vrsa/visa\\_vrsa.html](http://www.cdc.gov/HAI/organisms/visa_vrsa/visa_vrsa.html)