

Have you seen or heard the term “*Red Man Syndrome*” to describe Vancomycin infusion reaction?

LET'S WORK TOGETHER to fix this
at UW Medicine!

Why change the term?

- It perpetuates discrimination against Native American & Indigenous Peoples including our patients who may withdraw from receiving our care if referred to as a “red man.”
- It is NOT a reflection of the physiology of the reaction—not everyone turns red!
- It affects women and men equally.

ACTION

1) If you hear someone say or write “*red man syndrome*,” please share this information with them. Ask them to say “**Vancomycin infusion reaction**” instead. *Please be kind*—this is a new term for most healthcare providers!

2) If you see “*red man syndrome*” in an Epic allergy banner, replace this terminology- see below:

The image shows two screenshots of an Epic allergy banner. The top screenshot shows the text "Other reaction(s): Sensitivity" followed by "Red Man Syndrome tolerates at slower rate (100ml/hr)". The bottom screenshot shows the same banner with "Vancomycin Infusion Reaction" replacing "Red Man Syndrome". Both screenshots include a rich text editor toolbar with icons for undo, redo, bold, italic, link, unlink, list, and a 100% zoom level. The bottom screenshot also includes a "Characters remaining: 409" indicator.



Position on Terminology for Vancomycin Flushing Reactions (September 2021)

The Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA), its HIV Medicine Association (HIVMA), the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA), the Pediatric Infectious Society (PIDS) and the Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists (SIDP) support universal removal of the slur “red man syndrome” and recommend replacing it with “vancomycin infusion reaction,” a term that emphasizes pathophysiology over visual appearance on skin.