

Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus

A Guide For Patients/Families



This brochure provides information about Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA). It is designed to respond to questions most frequently asked by patients and their families.



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What is MRSA?

MRSA stands for 'Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus'. Staphylococcus Aureus is a type of bacterium (germ) which usually lives harmlessly on the skin, or nose, but sometimes causes infections such as 'boils' and wound infections, which may require antibiotic treatment. What makes MRSA different is that many commonly prescribed antibiotics are not effective against this bacterium – it is resistant to them.

What Problems Can MRSA Cause?

MRSA causes the same infection as others and is no more dangerous than ordinary Staphylococcus Aureus. Many people carry MRSA on their skin, or in their nose, and are not infected or ill at all.

How Do I Know If I Have MRSA?

You cannot tell if you have MRSA as you will not look or feel any different. It will only be found if you have a special lab specimen taken, for example, of a wound, or blood.

Who Are At Risk Of Having MRSA?

Patients who have:

- < Prolonged or repeated hospital stays;
- < Undergone insertion with invasive devices (intravenous and catheters) or procedures including surgery;
- < Been treated with lots of antibiotics.





Is There Any Special Treatment For MRSA?

Yes. However, in many cases treatment is not required. If treatment is needed, the doctor can prescribe special creams, lotions or antibiotics to which MRSA is not resistant.

Are there any precautions required?

Good basic personal hygiene precautions are important and should be followed. Routine hand-washing is extremely important to help prevent all infections, including MRSA.

Quick Guide To Handwashing

- < Be sure to wash hands well;
- < Wet your hands with warm water;
- < Apply soap and scrub for at least 15 seconds. Wash the front and back of your hands and wrists, between fingers and under the nails;
- < Rinse well. Let water run down your fingers, not down your arms;
- < Dry hands with a clean towel or a paper towel;
- < Use elbows or a new paper towel to turn off faucets;

If there is staff attending to you while you have MRSA, they should wear disposable gloves and an apron when actually coming in physical contact with you. This will help prevent MRSA spreading to the hands of the healthcare workers.



Can I Pass MRSA On To My Relatives And Friends?

No. It is not a risk to healthy people. However, people who are sick, or whose resistance towards infection is weak, critically ill patients, neonates, children or patients with wounds, can be colonised and get this infection.

What Happens If I Am Admitted To The Hospital?

It is your responsibility to inform the hospital staff (doctor and/or nurse) at the time of admission because sick patients are at risk of colonisation (presence of bacteria without any signs and symptoms) or infection with MRSA.

For more details, please contact

"Infection Control Department"

7:00 AM – 4:00 PM (Five days)

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