

Patient Information Sheet

MRSA (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus)

What is MRSA?

MRSA is a bacteria that has developed a resistance to many antibiotics such as methicilline. For example MRSA can be found in the nose, rectum, urine or in a wound. People who have a weakened immune system, who have taken many antibiotics, who have had frequent or long hospitalizations are more at risk to get MRSA.

Another strain of MRSA known as “community associated” was recently found among contact sport teams, intravenous drug users, homeless and inmates in detention centers.

How is MRSA transmitted?

MRSA is transmitted by direct contact with contaminated hands or objects.

Can MRSA be treated?

For most of the people the bacteria will not cause health problems and will not need to be treated. Antibiotics could be prescribed only to persons who have an infection caused by MRSA or at high risk to have an infection.

Can my family and friends get MRSA?

The risk of spreading MRSA to healthy family members and the entourage is very low. Frequent hand washing is the best way to reduce risk of transmission.

What should I do at the hospital?

Always wash your hands before eating and after using the bathroom. Remind others, including your doctors and nurses, to wash their hands before touching you.

Why are special precautions needed?

To prevent the spread of MRSA to other patients and to protect everyone, we use gowns and gloves when we care for someone who has MRSA. Visitors who come to see you will also need to wear a gown and gloves and wash their hands upon entering and exiting the room. We ask that you remain in your room except for tests and procedures or as directed by your nurse.

What should I do when I go home?

Hand Hygiene:

Keep your hands clean by washing thoroughly with soap and water or by using an alcohol base handrub

Wash your hands for at least 15 seconds:

- before handling food
- before eating
- after using the toilet
- after touching dirty or contaminated surfaces

Also, remind other people in your home to wash their hands regularly.

Personal items: Do not share personal items such as soap, toothbrush, razor, towels, cigarettes, cosmetics and water bottles.

Housecleaning: An all-purpose, regular household cleaner can be used for cleaning.

Laundry: Hot water with a regular laundry detergent and drying clothes in a dryer are helpful to remove the bacteria.

Dishes: Regular cleaning of dishes, either in a sink with soap and hot water or in a dishwasher is fine.

You may continue with your activities.

When you go for a hospital, medical or dental appointments please inform the staff that you have MRSA.