

## CARE IN YOUR HOME

**MRSA is no more dangerous than other normal bacteria that people carry on their skin and are exposed to every day.**

The following steps can be taken to decrease the risk of transmission.

### Handwashing:

- You and all contacts ( family , friends , health care workers) will need to wash hands with soap and water after contact with you or contact with items that you have touched.
- Wash hands before preparing all food and before eating.
- Always wash hands after using the toilet, or after touching any objects which may be contaminated with stool. ( When in doubt- hand wash)

### Housekeeping:

- The surfaces in your home that are most likely to be contaminated, should be cleaned with a regular household cleaner.( Mr. Clean, Lysol etc.) Frequently touched areas such as the bathroom and personal care equipment should be cleaned daily.

### Laundry:

- Laundry can be cleaned in a washer and dryer with your regular detergent. Feces on linen or clothing should be disposed of into the toilet and clothing rinsed prior to washing.

### Dishes and eating utensils

- Dishes can be washed in a dishwasher or in the sink with your regular dishwashing soap. Your dishes do not need to be separated from the other dishes.

**The 7 steps for effective hand washing are listed below:**

1. Remove rings.
2. Turn on water and wet hands and wrists
3. Apply soap
4. Friction to all surfaces for a minimum of 15 seconds  
Make sure to clean between fingers and under nails by rubbing the tips of the fingers against the palms of the opposite hand,
5. Rinse well under running water.
6. Pat hands dry with clean paper towel.
7. Turn taps off with a dry paper towel.

**Proper hand washing technique for using alcohol hand gel**

1. Apply enough product in palm of hand to cover all Surfaces ( 2 pumps from dispenser)
2. Rub hands together in a circular motion. Interlace fingers and rub under fingernails until product has evaporated.

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## Five Hills Health Region



## Infection Control

## Antibiotic Resistant Organisms

## MRSA

## Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus

### Information Booklet



# ***MRSA (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus)***

## What is an Antibiotic Resistant Organism?

When an individual has an infection, antibiotics are medicines that are used to kill the organism( bacteria) causing the infection. The usual antibiotics do not kill an antibiotic resistant bacteria. If an antibiotic resistant bacteria causes an infection, then a stronger antibiotic must be used.

## What is *Staphylococcus aureus*?

*Staphylococcus aureus* is a bacteria that lives on the skin and in the noses of about 25 % of us. This is called colonization, and occurs with other bacteria all over our bodies. Colonization does not require treatment. These same bacteria, under the right conditions, can cause infection. Infection is when the organism gets past the person's normal defenses and becomes a pathogen, examples include blood stream infections, pneumonia, urinary tract infections and wound infections.

## What is *MRSA*?

The usual antibiotic( drug) used to treat infections caused by *Staphylococcus aureus* was a penicillin -like antibiotic call methicillin. Unfortunately, some *Staphylococcus aureus* are no longer killed by methicillin and are called Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*.

## How did I get *MRSA*?

*MRSA* has been found in the community and the hospital setting on persons and their surroundings. **It is mainly spread by contact with unwashed hands or gloves. Hand washing is the most important practice to prevent the spread of bacteria.**

## Why try to prevent the spread of *MRSA*?

It is important to prevent the spread of *MRSA* from one patient/resident to another. Patients/Residents most at risk include someone who is already ill and whose natural defense systems are weakened. Infection with *MRSA* causes increased patient illness and costs.

## How can *MRSA* be spread?

*MRSA* can be spread to other people by contact between persons. This contact occurs by touching. Spread of infection occurs by :

- Picking up the bacteria from the environment on hands
- Sharing objects between patients without cleaning in between.

## What will be different in the Acute Care facility?

- You will be moved to a single room or share with another *MRSA* positive patient.
- Signage will be posted on your door to remind staff and visitors who enter your room about the **Contact Precautions** required.
- Staff and visitors taking care of you will need to wear gloves and a gown.
- In some instances, a mask/eye protection will be added to the gloves and gown if *MRSA* is positive from your sputum. The signage on the door would change to **Droplet/Contact** in that instance.
- You must wash your hands and cover your clothing with a clean gown before you leave the room. You should leave your room only when necessary.
- Medical equipment will be dedicated to your room or cleaned between use.
- **It is very important for all staff and visitors to cleanse their hands when they leave your room. Do not be shy about reminding everyone to wash.**

## Contact Precautions Removed– Acute Care

- Precautions will be removed when three cultures taken from the infected/colonized sites one week apart are negative for *MRSA*.

## What will be different in Long Term Care ?

- You will be placed in a single room . You may share a room with another *MRSA* positive resident.
- You should wash your hands after you go to the bathroom ,touch your nose, and before you eat or participate in any common activities.
- If nasal colonization only, **Routine Practices** shall be followed if you have good hand hygiene practices. There may be times that an upgrade to **Contact Precautions** may occur.
- If you have a site that is *MRSA* positive then you will be placed on **Contact Precautions** while the site is healing. Signage will be placed on your door. An upgrade to **Droplet/Contact Precautions** may be necessary if sputum positive. Once treatment has finished, you may be able to revert to **Routine Practices** if site can be covered and secretions contained.
- While on **Contact Precautions**, gowns and gloves will be required for personal care by staff and visitors. You may be allowed out of your room for some activities if the positive *MRSA* site can be covered and secretions contained.
- **It is very important for staff and visitors to cleanse their hands when they leave your room. Do not be shy about reminding everyone to wash.**

## Contact Precautions Removed– Long Term Care

- Contact precautions may be discontinued after infection has resolved and site and secretions can be covered. Follow-up will be done until 3 cultures taken from site/colonization one week apart are negative for *MRSA*.