

What other things should I do to prevent the spread of this germ?

Hand washing is the single most important thing you can do. Hand washing should be done:

- Before eating or drinking
- Before wound care
- After using the toilet
- After blowing your nose
- Before and after diaper changing
- After handling your pet

Stay clean - Bathe or shower daily. Do not touch or squeeze spots or pimples with your fingers. Keep wounds covered with a dressing until they appear dry. Ask your doctor to look at any wound that is draining, becomes painful, red or swollen.

Is it safe to have visitors?

Yes, but please have your visitors adhere to the following precautions:

- Do not sit on the chair that the resident is using.
- Do not sit on the bed or touch the bed.
- Wash their hands with soap and water before and after they visit you.

- If visitors are going to assist with your care, please have the visitor talk to your nurse. Visitors will have to wear gloves and a gown while assisting with your care.
- Our policy discourages children from visiting residents on isolation precautions. The Infection Control Coordinator or Unit Manager will gladly speak with you if you are requesting a visit from a child.

If someone had MRSA at home, what does the caregiver need to do?

The following is recommended:

1. Wash hands before and after providing care.
2. Wear gloves if handling body fluids (blood urine, wound drainage, stool) & wash hands after removing the gloves.
3. Keep all skin wounds, cuts or scrapes clean & covered with a bandage until healed on the person &/or caregiver.
4. Clothing & linens that are not soiled with blood & or body fluids can be washed with household laundry liquid. Clothing & linen soiled with blood & or body fluids should be washed separately in hot water & detergent.
5. Do not share personal items such as towels, wash clothes, clothing or razors.

We hope this fact sheet answers most of your questions. Any questions or concerns please call your physician or Infection Control at 732-431-7437.

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Monmouth County Care Center
John L. Montgomery Division

Information for Residents and Visitors

MRSA

*(Methicillin-Resistant
Staphylococcus Aureus)*



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What is Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)?

Staphylococcus Aureus (Staph) is a common type of germ called bacteria. It is normal to find this germ on your skin and in your nose. Most of the time it does not cause any harm. Sometimes the germ gets inside the body, usually through an opening in the skin and causes an infection. You can have a Staph infection in: wound, urine, sputum and blood. Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) is a strain of this germ that has become resistant to antibiotics commonly used to treat “staph” infections. When MRSA causes infection it can be treated, but sometimes strong and costly antibiotics must be used.

Who is at risk for MRSA infections?

People at risk include the elderly, patients from long term care facilities, those who have frequent hospitalizations, people who are on chemotherapy / other immunosuppressant drugs, or who have open wounds or tubes going into their body.

What is the difference between colonization and infection?

Being colonized with MRSA means that the bacteria are present on or

in the body, but do not cause illness. The MRSA bacteria are usually found either on the skin or in the nose of colonized people. Being infected with MRSA means that the bacteria cause the person to be sick. You can be contagious whether you are colonized or infected.

Are MRSA infections treatable?

Yes, when necessary, your physician will order correct antibiotic therapy when an infection is present. Colonization usually does not need treatment.

Will anything be done to get rid of MRSA found in my nose?

Probably not, however, some physicians might choose to “decolonize” a patient if they are planning to undergo certain procedures, such as surgery, to decrease the risk of the resident becoming infected from their own germs.

Is MRSA contagious?

Yes, MRSA can be contagious whether you are colonized or infected. Therefore, the staff will take steps to separate a resident with MRSA from other residents or group MRSA residents together

What can be done to prevent the spread of this germ to others?

While you are in the healthcare setting, you will be placed on contact precautions until the MRSA has gone away. This means that all those who care for you will

wash their hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and use gloves and cover gowns when taking care of you. A sign will be placed outside your door to remind those who enter to use these precautions. You may also be placed in a private room. You should be careful about washing your hands or using a hand sanitizer before you leave your room to prevent the spread of MRSA to others. Healthcare workers and visitors should practice good hand hygiene also.

Steps for proper hand washing:

- Wet hands and wrists with warm water.
- Dispense soap into hand.
- Lather for 15-20 seconds. Use friction and wash between fingers (reciting “Row Your Boat” 3 times is enough rub time).
- Rinse hands thoroughly.
- Dry hands with clean paper towel.
- Use paper towel to turn off faucet.
- Discard paper towel immediately.

Alcohol based hand sanitizer is acceptable to use when available and if hands are not visibly dirty.