

# Infection Prevention and Control

## MRSA



## Patient Information Leaflet

## **What is MRSA? (Meticillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*)**

*Staphylococcus aureus* is a type of bacterium (germ) that commonly lives on healthy skin. About one third of healthy people carry it quite harmlessly, usually on moist surfaces, such as the nostrils, armpits and groin. Meticillin resistant types of *staphylococcus aureus* do not respond to some antibiotics which can sometimes make MRSA infections hard to treat.

## **How did I get MRSA?**

Anyone can get MRSA including fit, healthy people. MRSA can be picked up through:

- Skin-to-skin contact with someone who already has MRSA e.g. close family members or during contact sports.
- Contact with an item or surface that has MRSA on it.

People who are very ill or those who have had a lot of antibiotics for other infections have an increased risk of getting MRSA.

## **Will I have treatment?**

If you have an infection due to MRSA you may need antibiotics. This will be decided by your doctor and depends upon which part of your body has been shown to have MRSA and if there are signs of infection.

Many people have MRSA living in their nose and on their skin without it causing an infection. If you are one of these people you may be given a cream for your nose and a body wash to reduce the number of MRSA bacteria.

## **How can I prevent passing MRSA to others?**

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, throw the tissue in the bin at once and then clean your hands.
- Clean your hands frequently with liquid soap and water or hygienic hand rub, especially after touching your nose / skin, before eating and after using the toilet.

- Avoid touching your wounds, drips, catheters and tubes as this may introduce MRSA into your body. Clean your hands before and after if for any reason you do need to touch them.
- Do not touch any areas of infected skin.
- Encourage visitors and staff to clean their hands.
- Inform staff when you have used the bathroom so that cleaning can take place before anyone else uses it.

You may be asked to move into a single room whilst in hospital to reduce the risk of spreading MRSA to others. Staff may wear aprons and gloves when caring for you to assist with this.

### **Can I still have visitors?**

Yes you can still have visitors. Visitors should come to you last if they have others to visit in the hospital. Visitors should be asked to clean their hands with soap and water or hygienic hand rub before and after visiting you.

### **Will having MRSA affect my treatment?**

No. Any urgent tests or treatment you need will not be affected by having MRSA. Occasionally a non urgent test or treatment may be postponed until you have completed a course of body wash and nasal cream. This is to prevent MRSA spreading to another part of your body.

### **Am I able to go home with MRSA?**

MRSA should not delay you going home as long as you are deemed well enough by your Doctors. You may be asked to complete the course of body wash and nasal cream / or antibiotics if required at home. Please continue to follow good hand hygiene at home to reduce the risk of MRSA coming back.

**Should you have any further questions or require further advice please speak to your doctor, nurse or Infection Prevention staff.**

**Infection Prevention Department**

**01535 294848**

**Write down any questions you may wish to ask**

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The Public Health England website and will give further guidance and information: <https://www.gov.uk/health-protection/infectious-diseases>

If you require this leaflet in other languages or formats please telephone the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on: 01535 294019 for advice.

Please raise any issue you may have about your care and treatment with a member of staff. Raising your concerns will not adversely affect the care you will receive.

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