



In this document the term patient is inclusive of patient, resident and client.

What is Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA)?

Staphylococcus aureus is a type of bacteria that can live harmlessly on the skin and in the nose of people. However, it can sometimes enter into the body and cause an infection. This bacteria can become resistant to methicillin and other antibiotics, making the infection harder to treat.

How do you get MRSA?

MRSA can spread on contaminated hands and hard surfaces such as countertops, toilets, and bedrails. The bacteria can live on hard surfaces for days or even weeks.

Can MRSA be treated?

If you carry MRSA but do not have symptoms, you are considered 'colonized' and don't need to be treated. If you get an infection, your doctor will work with you to choose the right treatment. If you are prescribed an antibiotic, it is very important to finish your full course of the antibiotic, even if you start feeling better.

What happens in the hospital (or long term care) if I have MRSA?

If you have MRSA, extra safety measures will be taken when you are in a healthcare facility:

- A sign will be placed on your door, and people will need to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) like a gown and gloves, when entering your room.
- If you are in the hospital, you should stay in your room unless it is necessary to leave for medical reasons like a medical test or procedure.
- If you are in long term care, you can leave your room and join group activities. Be sure to wash your hands, wear clean clothes, and cover any open wounds.

Is it safe for people to visit me if I have MRSA?

Yes, family and friends can visit you. We ask that they clean their hands before and after visiting. If they will be helping you with care, like feeding, bathing, or using the bathroom, they should wear the PPE listed on the sign.

What should I do at home to prevent MRSA from spreading?

There are simple things you can do at home to stop MRSA from spreading:

- Clean your hands regularly. This is the best way to stop germs from spreading.
- Do not share personal items like towels, clothing, bar soap, or razors.
- Clean your home often, especially the kitchen and bathroom, with a household disinfectant.
- Wash your clothes with regular laundry soap and in a normal wash cycle.
- Cover any draining wounds with a clean, dry dressing.
- Tell your healthcare providers that you have MRSA so they can help prevent the spread to others and choose the right antibiotics, if needed. Always take antibiotics exactly as prescribed.

