

INFECTIONS MRSA CAN CAUSE:

- Red bumps (pimples)
- Folliculitis (infected hair follicles)
- Boils
- Abscesses
- Impetigo
- Cellulitis (soft tissue infection)
- Pneumonia
- Endocarditis (infection of the lining of the heart)
- Meningitis
- Osteomyelitis (infection in the bone marrow)
- Septicemia (infection in the blood stream)

HOW IS MRSA SPREAD?

MRSA is usually spread through person to person contact or contact with a contaminated item such as clothing, athletic equipment, towels, razors. MRSA can also spread from one part of the body to other parts of the body or to another person through contact with the drainage from an infected wound. Poor hygiene practices (e.g., not washing hands thoroughly and often) can also help spread MRSA. Because MRSA can live on the skin and survive on some surfaces for a prolonged period of time, we are all at some risk of exposure to the infection.

RISK FACTORS FOR MRSA INFECTION:

- Close skin-to-skin contact
- Touching items/surfaces contaminated with the MRSA bacteria
- Inadequate personal hygiene (Wash your hands!)
- Openings in the skin (cuts, scrapes)
- Crowded living conditions, like the residence halls
- Recent hospitalization, dialysis, or surgery
- Living or working in a long-term care or rehabilitation facility
- Indwelling medical devices, e.g., an IV or catheter

If you have a MRSA infection, this is what you can do to prevent the spread:

- ✓ Only use antibiotics as directed by your healthcare provider.
- ✓ Keep the wound clean and covered with a bandage until it heals.
- ✓ Keep your hands and skin clean. Wash your hands thoroughly and often for at least 15 seconds (2 choruses of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star".)
- ✓ Don't share personal items like bar soap, wash cloths, towels, and razors, even among family members or roommates.
- ✓ Clean and disinfect surfaces, equipment, and shared items that are frequently touched. Follow the manufacturer's instructions using an appropriate cleanser and disinfectant.

NOTE:

Clean hands are the single most important factor in preventing the spread of dangerous germs. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water and scrub for at least 15 seconds.

For additional information:

www.michigan.gov/mdch

www.reduceemisuse.org

www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar_mrsa-ca.html

CMUHEALTH SERVICES

Foust Hall 200

989-774-6599 TDD: 989-774-3055

Email: healthservices@cmich.edu

www.healthservices.cmich.edu

HSPE-MRSA0708

Community Associated

MRSA

It has spread from the hospital out into the community and now YOU NEED TO KNOW about it!

**Methicillin-Resistant
Staphylococcus aureus**

MRSA

CMUHEALTH SERVICES

Supporting Healthy Decisions



WHAT IS MRSA?

Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) is a type of “staph” bacteria that causes skin infections that don’t respond to most antibiotic treatment. It is commonly found on the skin and in the nose of 20-30% of healthy individuals. It often causes skin infections, but it can also cause more serious infections such as pneumonia or blood stream infections. MRSA was traditionally seen in people who have been recently hospitalized or treated at a healthcare facility, such as a dialysis unit. MRSA is diagnosed by taking a culture of the infected site.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY-ASSOCIATED MRSA?

Now MRSA infections also occur in people who have *not* been hospitalized or had a medical procedure, e.g., dialysis or surgery, within the past year. Community-associated (CA-) MRSA infections have been identified among military recruits, daycare attendees, injection drug users, prisoners, athletes and others who live in crowded settings, i.e., residence halls, or routinely share items contaminated with bacteria. The infections, while often treatable, have sometimes been fatal.

WHAT DOES MRSA SKIN INFECTION LOOK LIKE?

A MRSA skin infection may be mistaken as a spider bite. It can begin as reddened area on the skin or resemble a pimple that can then develop into a skin abscess or boil and cause fever, swelling, pus, and pain. There may also be malaise and headache. The infection can quickly spread to other parts of the body or to other people.

HOW IS CA-MRSA TREATED?

Antibiotics are *not* always needed to treat MRSA skin infections. Sometimes a healthcare professional only needs to open and drain the wound. The wound must be cleaned often and kept covered to prevent the spread of infection.

A culture of the wound will tell the healthcare professional if an antibiotic is necessary and which ones should be used. These infections can progress to a more serious and more difficult to treat stage if not treated properly. It is very important to follow your healthcare professional’s instructions.

WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT MRSA?

There are a number of things you can do to protect yourself from MRSA and help prevent the spread to others:

- **Practice good personal hygiene.**
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after touching wounds or bandages. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when running water is not available.
 - Don’t share personal items, e.g., clothing, towels, bar soap, or razors—even with family members or roommates.
 - Use “universal precautions”, i.e., treat all wounds as if they were infected and avoid direct contact with the wound, any drainage, and anything that might have come in contact with either the wound or the drainage.
- **Use good wound care practices.**
 - **At the first sign of an infection (redness, swelling, warmth, tenderness, draining pus), seek treatment from your healthcare professional.**
 - Keep open wounds clean and covered with a dry bandage, especially if the wound is draining.
- **Do your laundry with infection control in mind.**
 - Wash sheets, towels, clothing in water at the hottest suitable temperature and detergent. Add bleach, if the label permits it.
 - Dry your laundry in a dryer at the highest suitable temperature—do not line dry.
- **Make careful housecleaning a high priority.**
 - Clean and disinfect high-touch or soiled surfaces, e.g., door knobs, telephones, shared athletic equipment) as directed on the label.
 - Select an appropriate disinfectant, e.g., diluted bleach, Lysol®, Original Pine-Sol® and follow the label instructions for appropriate dilution directions and contact times so that you know the surfaces have been disinfected appropriately.
- **Use antibiotics appropriately.**
 - Antibiotics are anti-bacterial and do *not* work on viral infections. They should *not* be taken for the flu or colds.
 - When needed, antibiotics should be taken exactly as prescribed
 - Do *not* share antibiotics with others.