

Patient Education



MRSA While in the Hospital

What is MRSA?

- Staphylococcus Aureus is a germ that lives on the skin and mucous membranes of healthy people.
- Occasionally S. Aureus can cause an infection. When S. Aureus develops resistance to certain antibiotics it is called methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus, or MRSA.

How is MRSA Spread?

- MRSA is spread from one person to another by contact, usually on the hands of caregivers.
- MRSA can be present on the caregiver's hands either from touching contaminated material excreted by the infected person or from touching articles contaminated by the skin of a person with MRSA, such as towels, sheets and wound dressings. MRSA can live on hands and objects in the environment.

Special Precautions for MRSA

It is important that special precautions are taken to stop MRSA from spreading to other patients in the hospital. These precautions include:

- Single room accommodation (the door can remain open).
- A long-sleeved gown and gloves will be worn by everyone who cares for you.
- A sign may be placed on your door to remind others who enter your room about the special precautions.
- The room and the equipment used in the room will be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Everyone who leaves your room must clean their hands well.
- You must clean your hands before you leave your room.

Family and Visitors

- Your family and visitors should not assist other patients with their personal care as this may cause the germ to spread.
- They may be required to wear a long-sleeved gown and gloves while in your room.

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- Before leaving your room, visitors must remove the gloves and gown and dispose of them in the garbage container and the linen hamper located in your room.
- Visitors must then clean their hands.

Good Hand Hygiene Practices

Remind all staff and visitors to practice good hand hygiene before and after they touch you. Ask your nurse or doctor to demonstrate proper hand hygiene techniques (15 seconds of soap and running water OR alcohol-based hand rub until hands are dry).

You need to clean your hands:

- **After using the bathroom.**
- **After blowing your nose.**
- **Before eating and drinking.**
- **Before and after you touch your dressing or wounds.**
- **When your hands are visibly dirty (soiled).**
- **Before you leave your room.**

What will happen at home?

If you have MRSA at the time of discharge from hospital, the following practices are recommended:

- Everyone who might help you with your personal hygiene or with going to the toilet should wash their hands after contact with you.
- Wash your hands before you make any food and before you eat. This practice should be followed by everyone in the household.
- Wash your hands well after using the toilet. Make sure others that use the bathroom wash their hands well afterwards.
- Clothing may be laundered in the usual manner, and along with, the rest of the household laundry.
- No special cleaning of furniture or items (e.g. dishes) in the home is required.
- Always tell your physician, paramedics, nurses or other care providers that you have MRSA. This helps prevent spread to others and helps your doctor choose the right antibiotics if necessary.

Continuing Health Care

When any further medical care is needed, you will need to let the health care worker know you have MRSA. You may still carry MRSA even though you feel well and it is causing you no harm. You will need to provide this information:

- **When you go to a doctor or dentist.**
- **When you go to the hospital or clinic.**

Source: Screening, Testing and Surveillance for Antibiotic-resistant Organisms (AROs), January 2013

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