

# MRSA

## METHICILLIN-RESISTANT *STAPHYLOCOCCUS AUREUS*



### What is MRSA?

- MRSA stands for Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*—a bacteria.

While *Staphylococcus aureus* is commonly found on the skin or in noses of healthy people without causing infection, MRSA is a type of staph that is resistant to antibiotics—making it more difficult to treat.

- MRSA is a common cause of minor skin infections, but can also cause more serious infections (such as pneumonia, bloodstream infections, and surgical wound infections).

The more serious infections may require hospitalization, especially in people with weakened immune systems.

### Where Does MRSA Come From?

- MRSA infections are found in the community (generally, where there are crowds of people), as well as in healthcare settings.
- Over the years the bacteria has become more *resistant* to antibiotics.

*Resistant* means the bacteria can no longer be killed by common antibiotics.



### What Do MRSA Infections Look Like?

- A skin infection may be mistaken for a “spider bite.”
- The infected area is often red, swollen and painful to touch.
- Pus may drain from the infected area.

### What Is MRSA Colonization?

- Colonization means that MRSA is present on or in the body without causing infection or an illness.
- People who are either colonized or infected can spread MRSA to other people.
- MRSA infection may spread to other areas of the body.

### How Is MRSA Spread?

- By not washing your hands frequently!
- By touching someone with an MRSA infection and not washing your hands.
- By touching anything contaminated with MRSA and not washing your hands.

### What Should You Do If You Think You May Have MRSA?

- The only way to be certain is to consult with a doctor. A doctor will determine the best type of treatment.

### What You Can Do To Stop The Spread Of MRSA:

- Keep your hands clean by washing thoroughly and frequently.
- Keep cuts clean and covered with a proper dressing or bandage until they are healed.
- Avoid contact with other people’s wounds or anything contaminated by a wound.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as razors, towels, toothbrushes, water bottles and sports equipment that directly touch your body.
- Clean objects such as gym and sports equipment before and after use.
- Shower with soap and water immediately after participating in sports or working out in a gym.
- Wash dirty clothes, linens and towels with hot water and laundry detergent.
- Dry clothes in a hot dryer, rather than air-drying them.
- Do not demand antibiotics from your doctor.
- Take ALL antibiotics as prescribed.
- Do not share antibiotics with anyone else.



### Resources

- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)  
[www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar\\_mrsa\\_ca\\_public.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar_mrsa_ca_public.html)
- Your local health department



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