

Will I need treatment at home?

If you are colonised with MRSA you may need to continue to use the treatment at home following a stay in hospital. Please do not let anybody else use your towels etc to prevent the infection spreading to others.

If you have any wounds that need to be re-dressed a district nurse may be needed to come out to your home.

Please Remember

- Hand washing with hot water and soap is the most effective and simplest way of controlling MRSA
- MRSA is acquired in the community as well as in the hospital
- If you are a visitor, please ensure you wash your hands on entering and leaving the ward. Hand sanitizer can also be used.
- If you have any hygiene concerns about a ward please report them to the ward sister.

Contact Information

Infection Prevention & Control Team
Contact Number:

01553 613613

Ext 2326/3221

For more information or advice please contact:

- Your hospital doctor or nurse
- Your GP practice

Review Date: March 2019

M785

Infection Prevention and Control MRSA

(Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus)



Patient and Relatives Information

What is MRSA?

Staphylococcus Aureus is a common bacterium that lives completely harmlessly in one third of people on the skin or in the nose. This is usually referred to as being colonised.

Most people who have MRSA carry it without any symptoms at all and it only poses a risk if somebody is already unwell. If you come into hospital as a patient or for any procedures there is a risk that MRSA is able to enter the body/bloodstream and cause an infection. This could happen via any wounds or any other invasive devices which could include catheters and cannulas.

To reduce the chance of this happening patients are screened for MRSA before a planned admission or on admission to the hospital and every week thereafter if still an inpatient.

How does MRSA spread?

MRSA can be spread from person to person via touch. This can happen if somebody has MRSA on their skin, they could then transfer it to other people and objects that they have touched. Other people can then pick it up on their hands and pass it on to others.

This is why the most important thing you can do to prevent spread whether you are a patient or a visitor is to wash your hands with soap and hot water as MRSA cannot be seen on your skin or surfaces.

How will I be screened for MRSA?

We can identify if you are carrying MRSA by taking swabs. This will be carried out by swabbing just inside both nostrils and another swab under the armpit. It could also include the groin. This is then sent away to the microbiology lab for testing. We may also take swabs from any ulcers or wounds that you may have.

How do you treat MRSA?

If you have been tested for MRSA and have a positive screen you will be treated by your doctor. MRSA responds to drugs and treatments depending on how widespread the infection is.

If you are found to have MRSA on your skin your doctor will usually prescribe you an antibacterial wash lotion. Whilst in hospital this will be called Octenisan which the nursing staff will explain how to use and also a cream for your nose.

You will more than likely be isolated into a single room on the ward to reduce the likelihood of transmission or isolated in the bedspace you are in if there are no available side rooms.

Whilst most MRSA infections are treated with the antibacterial wash and nasal cream some more serious infections may need to be treated with antibiotics.

Can I still have visitors?

Yes. MRSA does not normally harm healthy people. This includes pregnant women and infants. If you are having any visitors though, we would ask that they wash their hands with hot water and soap upon entering and leaving the ward (and side rooms). We ask that visitors do not sit on the patient's bed.

Ward staff will provide any advice that may be needed on any other precautions required.

Will I have to stay in hospital longer?

Most patients who are colonised with MRSA do not usually have to stay longer in hospital as you can still receive treatment at home. If you have a more serious infection you may have to stay in hospital until it has shown signs of clearing up.