

Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) in Long-term Care ♦ Information for Residents

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

Staphylococcus aureus (say *staff-ill-oh-kik-us aw-ree-us*), or “Staph”, is a very common germ. It lives on the skin and in the noses of many healthy people.

Methicillin Resistant means some antibiotics might not work to treat this germ and so it is harder to treat the infection.

What are the signs of MRSA?

MRSA can affect people in different ways. Some people can carry it in their nose or on their skin without showing any signs of illness.

If you have a MRSA infection on your skin, you might notice redness, swelling, and soreness in the infected area. If the infection gets into your blood, lungs, heart, bones, and joints, it is much more serious. You could have a fever, feel generally unwell, have little or no energy, and, depending on where the infection is, notice changes in how your body organs work.

Can MRSA be treated?

If you are someone who carries it on your skin or in your nose without any signs of illness, you do not need treatment.

If you have a MRSA infection, your doctor decides how best to treat the infection. This could include certain antibiotics that will work on this germ.

How can I stop the spread of MRSA?

Anyone who has the germ can spread it to others.

The most important thing you can do is to **clean your hands often**.



Use soap and water or an alcohol based hand rub.

Clean your hands before and after meals, after using the toilet, and before leaving your room.

If you have MRSA, we will use added precautions when giving you care in some situations. If you have a wound, we will wear a gown and gloves. If you have a cough, we will wear a medical mask. We might also ask you to stay in your room.

We understand that these precautions might be a challenge for you and your family. At the same time, we need to protect others from MRSA. We thank you for helping us stop the spread of this germ.

Can I have visitors if I have MRSA?

Of course you can! Here is what would happen.

Every visitor must do the following:

- Clean their hands before entering and when leaving your room.
- Leave the building after visiting you, not stopping to visit anyone else.

We might also ask them to do the following:

- Report to the nurses' station before entering your room.
- Wear a gown, gloves, and mask when taking part in your care such as helping with your bath.