

## What will happen when you're discharged from hospital?

If your healthcare team has told you that you have MRSA, we recommend the following once you are at home:

- Always tell your doctor, paramedics, nurses or other care providers that you have MRSA. This helps prevent spreading it to other patients.
- Anyone helping you with personal care or using the bathroom should wash their hands afterward.
- Make sure **you** wash your hands before you prepare food or eat.
- If you share a bathroom at home, clean the toilet and sink at least once a week with a disinfectant cleaner.
- There are no special directions for handling trash or laundry.
- Do not share towels with other family members.
- If you go to another health care facility or receive Home Care services, the staff will follow similar precautions.



## CLEAN YOUR HANDS



### Hand Sanitizer

- Squirt alcohol-based hand rub on your palm.
- Rub your hands and fingers for 15 seconds until the gel is dry.



### Soap and Water

- Use warm running water and soap.
- Wet hands with water.
- Lather and rub hands together for at least 15 seconds, paying attention to fingertips, cuticles, around rings, and under nails.
- Rinse thoroughly.
- Pat dry.
- Turn off taps with towel.
- To prevent dry cracked skin, apply hand lotion several times a day.

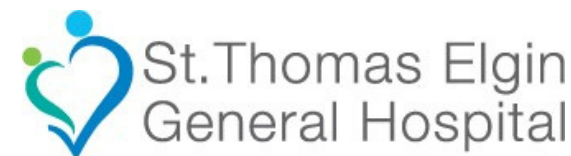


This brochure provides basic general information and is not a complete resource on MRSA. If you have questions, please ask your doctor, nurse, or local health unit.

# Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)



## Patient Education



## What is Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)?

*Staphylococcus aureus* (S. aureus) is a common type of bacteria that lives on our skin, in our noses, and in our rectums. Over time, using antibiotics has caused some S. aureus bacteria to change and become resistant to an antibiotic called Methicillin. This new form is called Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA).

MRSA can live on hard surfaces for many days and on hands for several hours. It is easy to kill by cleaning with alcohol-based hand rub or washing hands with soap and water.

## Who is at risk?

Those at highest risk for MRSA include:

- people who have been sick
- people who have taken many antibiotics
- people who have received healthcare



## Can it be spread?

MRSA spreads to other people through direct contact. This happens when:

- You get the bacteria on your hands from the environment and touch another person without washing your hands.
- Patients share objects without cleaning them between uses.

Precautions are taken when MRSA is found. These precautions help stop the bacteria from spreading to other patients in the hospital who are sick and more likely to get an infection.

## Colonization vs. Infection

Many bacteria live on and in our bodies without making us sick. This is called colonization, and it usually doesn't need treatment. However, the same bacteria can cause disease or infection if the conditions are right.

If MRSA causes an infection, we need to use antibiotics other than Methicillin to treat it.

## What can you expect in hospital?

- A Contact Precautions sign will be placed outside your door to help stop the spread of MRSA. Our staff will wear special protective gear and will clean more thoroughly.
- You might move to a private room (if available) or share a room with someone who has the same infection.
- If you need to go for tests, you must clean your hands with alcohol-based hand rub before leaving your room.
- A transport Contact Precautions sign will let staff know to wear gloves, gowns and masks when moving you.
- When you are admitted to the hospital in the future, you will be placed on contact precautions.

## What about family & visitors?

- You may still have visitors. They can help stop the spread of MRSA by cleaning their hands when they come in and leave your room.
- Visitors must wear a gown and gloves while in your room. They need to take off the gown and gloves and wash their hands if they leave the room, even if it's just to go to the nursing station.