

Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)

What is Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) mean?

MRSA is a type of bacteria/germ called Staphylococcus aureus that has developed resistance to meticillin (a type of penicillin antibiotic) and some other antibiotics that are used to treat infections..

Staphylococcus aureus is a common germ that is found on the skin and in the nostrils of about a third of healthy people. This is quite normal. Some people carry MRSA on their skin or in their nostrils.

This is described as colonised or a carrier of MRSA.

These people are unaware that they carry MRSA because it does not harm them and they have no symptoms. MRSA can cause harm when it gets an opportunity to enter the body.

It can cause simple infections such as boils, or more serious wound infections, chest infections or blood stream infections.

MRSA can cause problems in hospitals. This is because people who are ill are more vulnerable to infections.

How does MRSA spread?

MRSA usually lives harmlessly on the skin and is mainly spreads through touch, therefore undertaking hand hygiene is important for staff, patients and visitors.

How can you tell if someone has MRSA?

People who carry MRSA do not look or feel different from anyone. If MRSA causes an infection, then the symptoms can be the same as for any other infection, such as pain, redness, swelling or heat in the area. The infection may also cause a high temperature.



How is MRSA treated?

If you are carrying MRSA we may prescribe cream and washes to reduce the amount of MRSA on your skin. If you have an MRSA infection you can be treated with antibiotics, although the choice of antibiotics may be more limited. The MRSA result will be recorded in your electronic medical record.

What precautions are taken when a patient gets MRSA?

Our staff will clean their hands regularly, and use gloves ,aprons and other personal protective equipment where required while they are looking after you. Regular hygiene measures such as cleaning of your environment and equipment used for your care will be undertaken by staff. We sometimes care for patients with MRSA in a single room or a separate area for people who have MRSA.

You should avoid touching medical devices (if you have any) such as your urinary catheter tube and your intravenous drip, particularly at the point where it is inserted into your body or any wounds if you have any. We will ask your visitors to wash their hands. We may ask them to wear apron and gloves if they are assisting with your personal care. Visitors should avoid sitting on your bed and use the chairs provided in the ward.

Do patients with MRSA need to stay in hospital longer?

Patients who carry MRSA do not usually have to stay longer in hospital. However, patients who have an MRSA infection may have to stay until their infection clears up. Alternatively, they may need to continue treatment when they go home. A patient who is going to a nursing or residential home can be cared for safely using simple hygiene measures.

What happens when I go home?

Family life should continue as normal. It should not stop you being active, visiting friends or living your life as normal. Please note that:

- normal domestic cleaning is adequate
- clothing and bedding can be washed as normal in the family washing machine
- rubbish can go into the ordinary household waste
- community nurses may need to wear gloves and aprons when providing care for you, such as dressing wounds

If you need to be admitted to or attend hospital in future, including outpatient appointments, you should tell the staff that you have had MRSA in the past

Contact NHS and PALS

You can also visit the NHS website for general information about infection prevention and control.

[nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)

You can also contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), who can listen to your concerns, and direct you to the right place for more information.

Call 01189 605027 or email PALS@berkshire.nhs.uk

Contact us



Scan me



[berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk](https://www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk)



infection.control@berkshire.nhs.uk



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