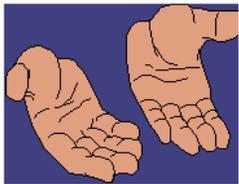




## *Washing hands with Soap and Water*

- Turn on water
- Apply soap
- Lather for 15 seconds rubbing all surfaces of hands and wrists
- Rinse under running water with fingers pointing down
- Pat dry with paper towel
- Turn off faucet with paper towel



## *Cleaning hands with Alcohol Rub*

- Apply product
- Rub into all surfaces of hands until dry

Additional information can be found at:

[http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar\\_mrsa\\_ca\\_public.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar_mrsa_ca_public.html)

[http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar\\_mrsa\\_in\\_schools.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar_mrsa_in_schools.html)

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/pdf/ar/MRSAPatientInfoSheet.pdf>



# MRSA

**Methicillin  
Resistant  
Staphylococcus  
aureus**

**Patient  
Education**

*Infection  
Prevention and Control*

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## **MRSA** **Methicillin Resistant** **Staphylococcus aureus**

### **What is it?**

Staphylococcus aureus is a bacterium or germ that usually lives in the inside of the nose and on the skin. With the MRSA strain of Staphylococcus aureus the antibiotic Methicillin cannot be used to treat an infection, it is "resistant".

MRSA can cause skin infections such as pimples or boils in healthy people. Sometimes it is described as 'a spider bite'. This strain of MRSA is called Community Acquired MRSA (CA-MRSA).

### **How did I get it?**

One of the ways Staphylococcus aureus "gets resistant" to the antibiotic Methicillin is from being exposed to antibiotics that you have taken to treat an infection.

Another way a person can acquire MRSA is from touching something with the MRSA germ on it and getting it into one's nose, onto one's skin or in a wound causing an infection.

### **How is it detected?**

MRSA can be detected by sending a culture of the inside of the nose to the lab. Cultures of urine, blood, or fluid from a wound can also identify MRSA if an infection is present.

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### **Will I feel sick?**

If the MRSA is only identified in the inside of the nose you will not feel ill or have symptoms of a cold. This is called being "colonized" meaning the bacterium is present but not causing symptoms of an infection.

### **Can I be cleared of MRSA?**

Your medical team may prescribe topical cream to get rid of the MRSA in your nose along with an antiseptic to shower or bathe with. Antibiotics would be used to treat MRSA that causes an infection. Sometimes the very ill and weak can be colonized with MRSA indefinitely.

### **What will be different?**

In the hospital you may be placed on contact precautions in a private room to prevent the spread of MRSA.

In Long Term Care (LTC) and Rehabilitation Facilities you may be on contact precautions and may have a roommate, but have a designated bathroom.

Healthcare workers will wear an isolation gown and gloves when providing care for you until the germ is no longer found in your culture. Wearing a gown and gloves is added protection to clothes and hands to ensure germs are not spread to the environment and other patients. All healthcare workers must clean their hands before entering and when leaving your room.

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### **What else should be done?**

- As always, all family members must wash their hands well with **soap and water** after using the bathroom and before eating.
  - Maintain good personal hygiene by showering and wearing clean laundered clothing.
  - Your laundry does not have to be washed separately unless it is visibly soiled with stool, urine or drainage from a wound. Use warm water and regular detergent; additional options include hot water, bleach, and automatic dryer.
  - Avoid sharing personal items such as; towels, washcloths, razors, sheets, bars of soap, and clothing (uniforms. gear).
  - Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth. Clean your hands before and after touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
  - Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces often in your home. I.e. faucet handles, toilet flushes, bedrails, door knobs etc.
  - Clean and disinfect the bathroom using a disinfectant often and whenever soiled.
  - Keep wounds, cuts or scrapes covered.
  - Alcohol hand rubs do kill MRSA on your hands, but use soap and water after using the bathroom.
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