



Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)

Information for patients who have tested positive for MRSA

What is MRSA?

Staphylococcus aureus is a type of germ (bacteria) that lives on the skin and in the nose of healthy people. Sometimes this bacteria can cause an infection.

Most Staphylococcus aureus infections can be treated with commonly used antibiotics. However, methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) do not respond to treatment with certain types of antibiotics therefore, treating infections with this germ can be difficult.

How is MRSA spread?

MRSA can live on the skin or on objects such as door knobs, towels and bed rails. It can be spread from one person to another by direct contact, usually from unwashed hands.

What Special Precautions are required for MRSA?

Together we can take steps to stop the spread of MRSA to other patients in the hospital:

- You will be asked to stay in a room by yourself or you may share a room with another patient who also has MRSA
- The healthcare workers who enter your room will wear gloves and a long sleeved gown
- A sign for “Contact Precautions” will be placed on your door to remind everyone who enters your room about the special precautions
- Your room and the equipment used in your room will be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Everyone who enters or leaves your room will wash their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer
- You must wash their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer and wear clean clothes/hospital gown before you leave your room

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What about my family and visitors?

Your family and friends can still come to visit you in the hospital if you have MRSA. If your visitor is helping you with your personal care (bathing, changing bed linens) they need to wear gloves and a long sleeved gown. Before leaving your room, they must remove gloves and gown and place them in the garbage inside your room then wash their hands with hand sanitizer. We ask that your visitors do not assist other patients. Instead, they can assist by using the call bell to ask for help.

Visitors must always wash their hands before entering and after leaving your hospital room with hand sanitizer from the dispenser located just outside your hospital room door.

Good Hand Washing Practices:

We invite you to ask anyone who enters your room to clean their hands before and after they touch you. Wash your hands for at least 15 seconds with soap and running water or hand sanitizer located in or just outside your hospital room. Please wash your hands often and ask your nurse for help to wash your hands, if needed.

When to Wash your Hands:

- After using the bathroom
- After blowing your nose
- Before eating and drinking
- Before and after you touch your wounds or dressings
- When your hands are visibly dirty
- Before leaving your room

What Will Happen at Home?

If you have MRSA when you are discharged from the hospital, the chance of spreading this germ to your family is small but we recommend the following:

- Everyone who might help you with bathing or toileting should wash their hands after touching you.
- Wash your hands before making any food or eating. Everyone in your family should do the same.
- Wash your hands after using the bathroom.
- Clothing can be laundered as usual with the rest of the household laundry.
- No special cleaning of furniture or dishes is required. MRSA is killed or washed away by household disinfectant and detergents.
- Always tell your doctors, nurses or other care providers that you have MRSA to stop its spread.