

## Do I have to take any special precautions when I go home?

- NO, good hand hygiene for all members of the household is the single most important infection control measure, not only to prevent the spread of MRSA but for lots of different types of infections.
- If you have wounds or dressings the community nurse will wear disposable aprons and gloves; this is because they are often going on to visit other vulnerable patients in the community.
- No special precautions are required for items laundered at home.
- There is no need to exclude yourself from any social event or public place if you feel well enough to attend.
- There is also no need to avoid close intimate contact with your partner.

## Where can I get more information about MRSA ?

If you have any further questions please contact: your ward nurse, general practitioner, district or treatment room nurse. Information is also available from the following websites.

- The Health Protection Agency [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)
- The Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, Georgia, have information about MRSA for patients on their web-site, [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/hip/aresist/mrsafaq.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/hip/aresist/mrsafaq.htm)

# MRSA

When you are discharged  
from hospital. . . .



## What is MRSA?

Staphylococcus aureus, often referred to as "Staph. aureus," are bacteria commonly carried on the skin or in the nose of healthy people. Occasionally, Staph. aureus can cause an infection; Staph. aureus bacteria are one of the most common causes of skin infections in the world. Most of these infections are minor (such as pimples and boils) and most can be treated without antibiotics. However, Staph. aureus bacteria can also cause serious infections (such as surgical wound infections and pneumonia). In the past, most serious Staph. aureus bacteria infections were treated with a certain type of antibiotic related to penicillin. Over the past 50 years, treatment of these infections has become more difficult because Staph. aureus bacteria have become resistant to various antibiotics, including the commonly used penicillin-related antibiotics. These resistant bacteria are called methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, or MRSA.

## How did I get MRSA?

You may have acquired MRSA before you came into hospital, as it is found in the community, or you may have acquired it in hospital.

## Who Should I Inform?

You should let your GP and any community nurses or staff that visit you know that you have been told you have MRSA. Your GP will be informed by the hospital after you have been discharged but sometimes this takes several days.

## Can MRSA harm my family and friends?

MRSA does not harm healthy people, including pregnant women, children and babies. MRSA can affect people who have certain long-term health problems, e.g. renal failure, diabetes. Please ask your GP or District/Community Nurse if you have specific worries in relation to friends and family.

## Will I need treatment for MRSA when I go home?

If you are colonised (have MRSA without any sign of infection) with MRSA it is unlikely that you will need to continue with your treatment when you go home, however, if you are discharged and prescribed antibiotics it is important that you complete the course. Further information can be obtained from your local Infection Control Team.

## What about screening?

You will not normally be screened for MRSA at home. If there is a medical reason, e.g. a wound becoming red or a new sore develops a swab may be taken to identify if any infection is present.

## What will happen if I am admitted to hospital again?

If you are re-admitted to hospital it is important that you inform staff if you have had MRSA in the past. In some cases you will be placed in a side room and screened again for MRSA. It is also important to inform a member of staff that you have had MRSA, if you visit an outpatient department, your GP's surgery, practice nurse or treatment room.