Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)

2. Treat and cover open wounds
   Any cut, abrasion, or skin lesion may be a point of entry for bacteria, including MRSA.
   Cleanse wounds, treat with an anti-infective solution or ointment, and cover with a band aid. Keep them clean and covered until they have healed.

3. Seek health care advice
   Consult your health care provider for any redness or swollen active wound, and for suspicion of a skin infection. Early diagnosis helps you to receive effective treatment.

4. Shower after each sport activity
   Shower with soap and water after sport events and close contact with athletic team to avoid the spread of CA-MRSA.

5. Never share personal items
   Towels, sport uniform, razors, clothing etc., should not be shared with others.
   Exclude athletes from joining your team where there is open wound or drainage that can not be contained with a waterproof band aid.

6. Thoroughly clean gear and equipment
   Commonly used surfaces – sport mats, shared equipment, benches must be washed before and after use.
   Non-washable items such as head gear must be wiped after each use with a disinfectant.

If I have MRSA, what can I do to protect others from getting infected?
• Seek medical advice and appropriate treatment for your infection.
• Keep your wounds clean and covered until they have healed completely.
• Discard your used band aid and used skin care materials properly, so no other person can accidentally touch them.
• If your doctor prescribed antibiotics, take it until you have finished the entire prescribed dose. Never share antibiotics with another person.
• Wash your hands frequently. Use alcohol based hand rub to disinfect your hands if hands are not visibly soiled.
• Do not share personal items such as used towels, razors, and clothing, bar soap, cosmetics, and lotions.
• If you have wounds that can not be covered with a waterproof band aid, or if the wound drainage can not be contained, do not go to swimming pools, public fitness clubs, saunas, and do not participate in team sports.

If I have MRSA, is my family at risk of getting infected?
• For casual household contact and if you have good hygiene practices, to protect others, your family is not at great risk of getting MRSA.
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• Disinfect surfaces after cleaning with a product that destroys microorganisms. (E.g. use one tablespoon of household bleach in a quart of water solution to disinfect washroom surfaces).
• Wash your dishes and do laundry just like the rest of your household members. You may want to use hot air cycle for drying.
• No special cleaning of furniture is needed.
• Use barriers between your skin and shared equipment – such as sitting on a clean towel if you are using a common bench or the same toilet seat.
• The best prevention that can stop the spread of infection is hand washing.
• A member of your family who helps with your personal care, similar to your health care provider, needs to perform good hand hygiene and follow precautions, such as wearing clean and disposable gloves and a long sleeved gown, especially if they can touch your open wound.

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For more information, please contact
Halton Region
Dial 311 or 905-825-6000
Toll free: 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866)
TTY 905-827-9833
www.halton.ca

Health Department
Promoting and Protecting Health
Preventing Disease. Proving EMS
January 2009

Practical Information for LTC and Retirement Homes
What is MSSA versus MRSA?

MSSA (Methicillin sensitive staphylococcus aureus) is the common type of Staphylococcus aureus. MRSA (Methicillin resistant staphylococcus aureus) is a type of MSSA that is not susceptible to antibiotics like penicillin. MSSA is more common in the community, while MRSA is more common in healthcare settings.

Are there different types of MRSA?

MRSA infections can be divided into hospital-associated (HA-MRSA) and community-associated (CA-MRSA). CA-MRSA is more common in people who participate in contact sports, while HA-MRSA is more common in hospital settings.

What are the symptoms of a MRSA Infection?

- Symptoms related to the type of infection and the body site affected by the infection. For example, MRSA can cause skin infections, pneumonia, and bloodstream infections.
- MRSA infections can be more severe and may require treatment with antibiotics.

How is MRSA spread?

- MRSA can be spread through direct contact with infected individuals or contaminated surfaces.
- MRSA can also be spread through coughing, sneezing, and other respiratory droplets.

Who is at risk for becoming infected with HA-MRSA?

- People with chronic medical conditions or weakened immune systems are at higher risk for HA-MRSA infections.
- Health care workers are at higher risk for HA-MRSA infections.

Who is at risk for CA-MRSA?

- People who participate in contact sports, such as football or wrestling, are at higher risk for CA-MRSA infections.
- People who have had recent cuts or wounds are also at higher risk.

How long will MRSA survive on surfaces?

- MRSA can survive on surfaces for up to 21 days, depending on the type of surface and the conditions.
- MRSA is more likely to survive on surfaces that are not easily cleaned, such as plastic and glass.

Can MRSA be treated?

- MRSA infections can be treated with antibiotics, but some strains are resistant to many antibiotics.
- Treatment options include oral antibiotics or intravenous antibiotics.

Do people die from MRSA?

- MRSA infections can be fatal, especially in people with weakened immune systems.
- Treatment is important to reduce the risk of complications and death.

Are MRSA numbers increasing?

- MRSA infections have increased in recent years, especially in healthcare settings.
- Public health officials are working to prevent MRSA infections by implementing infection control measures.

How can I prevent becoming infected with MRSA?

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your face and eyes.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched, such as door handles and remote controls.

When do I need to wash my hands?

- Before eating and drinking.
- After using the bathroom.
- After coughing or sneezing.
- After preparing food.
- After eating and drinking.
- After cleaning and caring for your wound.
- After your hands become contaminated with MRSA.

There is no effective vaccine against MRSA available at this time. It is important to practice good hygiene step by step.

1. Wash your hands
   Use soap and water or use alcohol-based hand rub for at least 15 seconds. Wash hands after touching any skin lesion, wound drainage either yours or others, or contaminated environmental surface.
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