

Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus Aureus* (MRSA)

1. What is MRSA?

MRSA is a type of bacteria that causes skin infections. MRSA is resistant to many types of antibiotics, but it's still treatable. MRSA skin infections can happen when the bacteria enter a scrape or cut.

2. What are the signs of MRSA?

These MRSA skin infections can look like a spider bite or an infected sore. The bump or infected area on the skin may be:

- Red and swollen
- Painful or warm to the touch
- Full of pus or other liquid

See a doctor right away if you have these symptoms, especially if the infection becomes worse or if you also have a fever.

3. Can MRSA cause serious illness?

Most MRSA infections can be treated with drainage of pus (removing liquid) and antibiotics, if needed. Sometimes MRSA can cause serious infections, even death. Contact your doctor right away if you think you have a MRSA infection. Getting appropriate care early can prevent these infections from becoming more severe. Don't try to treat the infection yourself by picking or popping the sore.

4. How does MRSA spread?

MRSA can spread through skin-to-skin contact with an infected wound, or from contact with surfaces contaminated from skin infections like sports equipment or benches. It can also spread by sharing personal hygiene items like towels, razors, or soap that have come in contact with infected skin.

5. Who is at risk for MRSA?

Anyone can get an MRSA infection. People who participate in activities that involve crowding, skin-to-skin contact, and sharing of equipment or supplies are at increased risk. This includes athletes, daycare and school students, those who are homeless, and military personnel living in barracks.

6. How can you prevent MRSA?

- Keep cuts, scrapes, and wounds clean and covered until healed
- Maintain good hand and body hygiene by washing your hands often and cleaning your body regularly after exercise
- Clean clothes and towels properly after use
- Clean shared surfaces, equipment and other items that can have contact with infected skin
- Don't share personal hygiene items like soap, towels, and razors
- Get care early if you think you have an MRSA infection



Key Points:

- MRSA is a bacteria that can cause skin infections.
- Some MRSA infections can become serious. See your doctor right away if you think you have an MRSA infection. Never try to treat it yourself by picking or popping the sore.
- You can prevent MRSA by covering scrapes and wounds, washing your hands and body, cleaning shared surfaces and equipment, and avoiding sharing personal hygiene items.

For more information:

Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health
publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/mrsa.htm
California Department of Public Health
www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/HAI/Pages/MRSAMethicillin-ResistantStaphylococcusAureus.aspx
www.cdc.gov/mrsa/about/index.html
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

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