

## Infection Prevention and Control

### MRSA

MRSA stands for Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus. MRSA is a germ that is harmlessly carried on the skin and in the nose of about 3 in 100 people. People who have MRSA on skin or in their noses are described as being “colonised.”

#### What problems can MRSA cause?

MRSA can cause problems if it can enter the body. This is more likely to happen to people who:

- are already unwell
- have wounds
- have a medical device such as a drip or a drain.

MRSA can cause abscesses, boils, or wound infections. These are called local infections.

Sometimes local infections can spread further into the body. This can cause serious infections, such as blood poisoning.

In hospital the main concern is that MRSA is resistant to the antibiotics used most frequently. These antibiotics cannot treat the infections MRSA causes. Alternative antibiotics are available to treat MRSA infections, but fortunately they're often not needed.



## Patient Information

### **Causes of MRSA**

It's difficult to say where you acquired MRSA. The MRSA germ is found in the community as well as in hospitals.

### **How we found out you had MRSA**

Your care team will be able to explain how your MRSA result was found.

Sometimes a routine MRSA screen is conducted, for example, before operations or if you previously been found to be colonised.

Some patients admitted via the emergency route may also have an MRSA screen taken via swabs. This will depend on what ward they're admitted to.

Sometimes MRSA is found during the routine investigations we perform as part of your care.

### **During your stay**

If you tested positive for MRSA whilst in hospital, you may be given an antiseptic wash to use daily. You may also be given a cream for your nose.

If the germ has entered your body and is causing an infection, your doctor may prescribe antibiotics.

### **How does MRSA spread?**

Like most germs, MRSA spreads easily by unwashed hands. We encourage staff, visitors, and patients to wash their hands regularly.

Staff may wear personal protective equipment (PPE) whilst caring for you, depending on the type of care they are giving you.

Most people suffer no ill effects from this germ and are totally unaware of its presence. But like any germ, MRSA can cause an infection.

## **Can I stay on the same ward?**

Yes, but you may be nursed in a single room whilst the germ is present.

If a single room is not available, you may be asked to move to a single room on another ward. This will be avoided if possible.

If there are several patients with the same germ, you may be nursed in a shared same sex bay.

## **Visitors**

Your friends and family may continue to visit you. They do not need to wear gloves or plastic aprons whilst visiting, unless they're involved in hands on nursing care.

Encourage your visitors to wash their hands when they arrive and before they go home.

Ask your ward nurse for advice on safe cleaning of clothes.

## **Going home**

Having MRSA should not delay your discharge. If you need a district nurse, they'll be informed of the MRSA result to ensure you receive the same care and advice you received when in hospital.

You do not need to take any special precautions when you get home. Your GP will be advised of your positive result in case you need antibiotics in the future.

## **If you are admitted to any hospital in the future:**

Tell your nurses and doctors that you've had an MRSA positive result previously.

If you wish to speak to the Infection Prevention and Control Nurses about any issues relating to MRSA, please ask the nurse looking after you.

## Patient Information

### **Infection Prevention and Control Team (IPCT)**

The IPCT help staff with the prevention and management of all infections across the Trust. You can contact them by telephone or by post:

#### **Infection Prevention and Control Team**

University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust

Clifford Bridge Road, Coventry CV2 2DX

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

024 7696 4791

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 5132 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

#### **Did we get it right?**

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