

## **Will I have to stay longer in hospital because I have MRSA?**

Most patients who are colonised with MRSA do not usually have to stay longer in hospital. If you have an infection you may have to stay in hospital longer.

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

If you are colonised 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 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.

It is also important to inform a member of staff that you have had MRSA, if you visit an outpatient department, your GPs surgery, practice nurse or treatment room.

## **Where can I get more information about MRSA ?**

- Health Protection Agency [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)
- The Centres 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

*Information for inpatients  
in the Primary Care Setting*



What is MRSA and how does it affect patients and the people around them – family and friends, nurses, doctors and other patients.

If you have any questions about MRSA ask a member of staff.

## What is MRSA?

MRSA stands for methicillin (M) resistant (R) Staphylococcus (S) aureus (A). It is a variety of a common bacteria called Staphylococcus aureus (SA). What makes MRSA different is that it is resistant to some antibiotics but not all. This SA bacteria lives completely harmlessly on the skin and in the nose of about one third of people. It is more common on skin that is broken, e.g. a wound.

People who have MRSA on their bodies or in their noses but who are unharmed by it, are described as being colonised. Sometimes MRSA can cause an infection, e.g. red painful wound, or pain when passing urine, if this occurs the person is described as being infected.

It is more likely to happen to people who are already unwell. It can cause infection which ranges from abscesses and boils to serious infections such as septicaemia via breaks in the skin, e.g. those caused by drips.

## How can you tell if someone has MRSA?

Patients who have MRSA do not look or feel different from other patients.

## How did I get MRSA?

You may have acquired MRSA before you came into hospital or you may have acquired it in hospital.

## How does MRSA change the way that you look after me and what will happen now?

Your local Infection Control Team will carry out a risk assessment and what happens next will depend on the results. In most cases no additional treatment is required.

Your nurse may take some swabs (from the nose, skin and any wounds that you might have). Your doctor may prescribe antibiotics or in some cases an ointment for your nose and a lotion that is used when you have a bath or shower.

You may be moved to a single room in order to prevent MRSA spreading to other patients in the ward. Or no additional precautions may be required.

## Can I have visitors, or 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 the nursing staff first if someone who as a long-term health problem wants to visit you. All your visitors will be asked to clean their hands (either with soap and water or alcohol gel) before and after they visit you as a general precaution.