



Infection Prevention and Control Department

MRSA

Information for parents and carers

Introduction

This fact sheet is aimed at providing parents and carers with information about MRSA (Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus).

What is MRSA (Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus)

Staphylococcus Aureus is a type of bacteria carried in the nose and skin of approximately 30-40% of healthy people. When this bacterium develops resistance to common antibiotics it is called MRSA. MRSA can spread within hospitals and may cause infections.

How does MRSA spread?

MRSA is mainly spread by hands. If people have MRSA on their hands they can transfer it to people and the objects they touch. This is why we ask everyone to clean their hands before and after touching patients.



How do you know if someone has MRSA?

People who carry MRSA do not look or feel different from anyone else. MRSA does not harm them and they have no symptoms of infection. When a patient comes to the Outpatient Department or to the Pre-Assessment Clinic before they are admitted to the hospital the nurse will take a swab to check for MRSA. MRSA infections are identified in the laboratory when children develop signs of infection and samples are sent to identify the cause.

If my child has MRSA does it mean they will be ill?

People can carry MRSA on their skin or in their nostrils quite harmlessly. Carrying MRSA does not mean your child is ill.

Why is MRSA a problem in hospitals?

Complicated medical treatments, including operations, provide opportunities for germs to enter the body. During procedures that involve breaking the skin MRSA can get into the body and may cause an infection. MRSA can cause local skin infections and in more vulnerable patients it can cause more serious infections.

What treatment(s) are available?

A patient may have an Octenisan body wash and Bactroban ointment applied to their nose for five days. Octenisan is a wash lotion for hair and body specially formulated to remove a broad range of micro-organisms including MRSA. Bactroban is used to skin treat infections. It works by killing or stopping the growth of organisms that have caused the infection.



Will my child be Isolated?

Where possible your child will be isolated in a side room. Isolation means caring for your child away from other children who may be at risk of catching the MRSA germ. All staff will wear gloves and aprons when caring for your child.

Could MRSA be passed on to others?

Yes. That is why we aim to isolate your child and take extra precautions such as wearing gloves and aprons and practising good hand hygiene. MRSA infections are unlikely to occur in healthy family and friends.



Can my child still have visitors?

Yes. Your child can still have visitors when in hospital and at home. Your child and visitors should to wash their hands when they arrive and before they leave.

Will I need to inform anyone my child is carrying MRSA?

Yes, if your child visits your GP or outpatients department or is re-admitted to hospital. If your child has to come back into hospital, they may be nursed in a side room again and the nurses will screen your child for MRSA.

Who to contact for further information or support?

For further information, please speak to the nurse in clinic or on the ward

This leaflet only gives general information. You must always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about your child's treatment.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.

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