

Infection Prevention and Control Department

## MRSA Screening

Information for parents and carers

### Introduction

This leaflet aims to inform you about MRSA (Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus Aureus*) and one of the measures being taken at Alder Hey to prevent it spreading.

### What is MRSA (Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus Aureus*)

It is a bacterium that can spread within hospitals and can lead to infections. *Staphylococcus aureus* is 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.

### If my child has MRSA does this mean they are ill?

Carrying MRSA does not mean that your child is ill. Your child does not pose any risk for other healthy people including older people, babies or pregnant women.

### Why is MRSA a problem in hospitals?

During procedures that involve breaking the skin, MRSA can get into the body and may cause an infection.

### What can be done to control or prevent MRSA spreading?

If we can identify that a child is an MRSA carrier before they come into hospital we can use a simple, safe treatment to reduce the amount of MRSA being carried.

As part of our measures to reduce the rate of MRSA infections in Alder Hey, we would like to take a swab from your child's nose to find out if he/ she is a carrier of MRSA.

### What are the benefits of my child being screened?

Screening will reduce the chance of your child later getting an MRSA infection or passing MRSA on to another patient.

### When will screening happen?

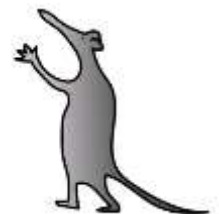
Screening will be done when your child attends their pre-admission clinic.

### Will screening hurt my child and how long will screening take?

The screening involves rubbing a swab within the nostril. This is painless and takes a few seconds.

### What happens to the swab?

The swab will then be tested for MRSA in the laboratory.



## Will we be told the result of the screening?

If your child's swab results are negative for MRSA you will not be contacted as there is no risk.

If your child's swab results are positive for MRSA, a member of the hospital staff will contact you, inform you about the results and answer any questions you may have.

## What are the treatments for MRSA carriage?

If your child is an MRSA carrier, Alder Hey will arrange for you to receive the necessary treatment with instructions about how to use it. The treatment consists of a body wash and a nasal ointment, which has to be used during the five days before your child's admission. No tablets or medicines are necessary.

The treatment reduces the amount of MRSA in your child's nose and skin. This will greatly reduce the risk of MRSA infection and spread within the hospital.

## Are there any risks when my child gets screened?

There is no risk associated with the screening process.



## Are there any alternatives to screening?

No. This is the nationally adopted method of screening.

## What will happen if I decide not to have my child screened?

Parents will not be forced to have their child screened. However, there may be delays to the treatment whilst appropriate measures are put into place. Each patient would need to be risk assessed in order to establish what is required to protect the child or other patients.

## Who should I contact for further information?

For further information, please speak to the nurse in the 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.

Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust  
Alder Hey  
Eaton Road  
Liverpool  
L12 2AP

Tel: 0151 228 4811  
[www.alderhey.nhs.uk](http://www.alderhey.nhs.uk)

