

May I have visitors?

Your family and friends may visit if you have MRSA. Your visitors have the option of wearing gowns and gloves, but they may not leave your room while wearing them. Visitors may not use your bathroom. Before they leave, visitors must dispose of their gowns and gloves in your room then clean their hands with soap and water or clean them with alcohol gel.

Can I go home if I have MRSA?

You can go home with MRSA. People who are at risk of getting sick from MRSA are patients who are ill with other diseases, have some type of medical device (tubes, drains) or those who have had recent surgery. Any or all of these factors make them more likely to get infections. Proper hand washing and good personal hygiene are the best ways to prevent the spread of MRSA. Wash your hands after using the bathroom, before you eat and before and after you handle any bandages or tubes. Others living in your home and anyone who may be assisting you need to do the same. Clean and disinfect your home often, especially the bathroom. Avoid sharing personal items such as towels, washcloths, razors, and clothing.

The Department of Epidemiology and Infection Control

Rhode Island Hospital's Infection Control Program seeks to improve the health status of our patients, staff and community. It is our mission to reduce the risk of hospital-acquired infections in the most professional and cost-effective manner possible. Your safety is our top priority.



Rhode Island Hospital

A Lifespan Partner

Department of Epidemiology
and Infection Control

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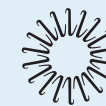
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Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus

Infection Control Patient Information



Breaking the Chain of Infection



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Advancing Medicine. Touching Lives.

What is MRSA?

MRSA stands for Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*. *Staphylococcus aureus* is a bacterium that can be found in the nose and on the skin of some people. It can make you sick if it gets into a wound, urine, blood or lungs. Some strains of *Staphylococcus aureus* have become resistant to Methicillin-like antibiotics, such as Nafcillin. This means that these antibiotics will not treat a MRSA infection.

How is MRSA spread?

MRSA can spread from one place on your body to another. MRSA is usually spread through physical contact and cannot be contracted through the air. It can be spread from patient to patient on the hands of hospital staff, or from items that are used on or by more than one person.

How is MRSA detected?

To test for MRSA, a culture is taken by swabbing your nose. Cultures of urine, blood, sputum or cultures taken from a wound may also show that you have MRSA.

Can MRSA be treated?

The Department of Epidemiology and Infection Control may order the use of a special soap for bathing/showering and the use of an ointment for your nose. Your doctor will order an antibiotic if you have a MRSA infection.

Why do I have to be in isolation?

At Rhode Island Hospital, we place patients who have MRSA in isolation to stop the spread of MRSA from one patient to another patient. All hospital staff must wear gowns and gloves when they enter your room so they will not get MRSA on their clothes or on their hands. Sometimes a mask may be worn, too. All persons who enter your room must wash their hands with soap and water or clean them with alcohol gel before entering and upon leaving your room. All equipment that is used for your care must stay in your room or be cleaned before it is taken out and used on another patient. Regular linens and dishes are used because dishes and linens from all patients are cleaned in a way that will destroy MRSA.

How long must I stay in isolation?

The Department of Epidemiology and Infection Control will determine how long you must remain in isolation. Usually patients may leave isolation after having two tests, over a period of time, that show you no longer carry MRSA.

Can I leave my room?

You may leave your room for testing. If your doctor allows you to leave your bed, you may walk in the hall if you wash your hands with soap and water **or** clean them with alcohol gel before you leave the room and you wear a clean gown or robe. Please do not sit in the lounge or waiting areas.



Handwashing
(If hands are visibly dirty)

Scrub with soap and water for 15 seconds. Rinse and dry thoroughly.



Alcohol Hand Rub or Gel
(If hands are not visibly dirty)

Rub into all surfaces of hands until dry.