

Recommendations to prevent Staph or MRSA infections:

- Wash your hands often or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer; however, visibly soiled hands should be washed with soap and water rather than an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Keep your cuts and scrapes clean and cover them with bandages
- Do not touch other people's cuts or bandages
- Do not share personal items like towels or razors
- If using shared exercise equipment, use a barrier (e.g., clothing or a towel) between your skin and shared equipment; and wipe surfaces of equipment before and after use
- Seek medical guidance for possible infections
- Clean large surfaces (e.g., floors and tabletops) routinely but regularly.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least daily.
- Clean immediately after spills of blood or body fluids like pus, stool, urine, or vomit. Use appropriate personal protective equipment, including gloves,

when cleaning blood or body fluid spills.

For additional information on Staph or MRSA:

Visit:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov

You may also contact:

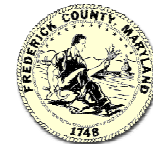
- Environmental Protection Agency www.epa.gov
- Your healthcare provider
- Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) www.edcp.org
- Frederick County Health Department www.co.frederick.md.us/HealthDept

Frederick County Health Department
350 Montevue Lane
Frederick, MD 21702
Phone (301) 600-3342
Fax (301) 600-1403
www.co.frederick.md.us/HealthDept

STAPH AUREUS A GUIDE FOR CONTROL AND PREVENTION



Frederick County Health Department



What is staphylococcus aureus or staph?

Staph is a type of bacteria that is commonly found on the skin, and elsewhere on the body, including the nose. Many of us (30-50%) periodically have staph living on our skin and have no symptoms or illness at all. This is called being “colonized”. Sometimes, though, staph bacteria can enter the body through a break in the skin, a cut, or an abrasion and then cause an infection.

What is MRSA?

Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) is a type of Staph that is resistant to some types of antibiotics. MRSA can be acquired in the hospital or in the community.

Avoid use of antibiotics if you do not have a bacterial infection. Antibiotics do not treat viral infections such as colds, flu and other viral infections.

Who gets Staph infections?

Anyone can get a Staph Infection. People are more likely to get a Staph infection if they have:

- Skin-to-skin contact with someone who has a Staph infection
- Contact with items and surfaces that have Staph on them
- Openings in their skin such as cuts or scrapes

- Crowded living conditions
- Poor Hygiene

What is HA-MRSA?

MRSA that is acquired in the hospital is called hospital-associated methicillin resistant staph aureus (HA-MRSA). MRSA is more common in hospitalized patients but is becoming an increasing problem in healthy, nonhospitalized patients.

What is CA-MRSA?

MRSA that is acquired in the community is called community-associated methicillin resistant staph aureus. It has become an increasing problem because it can occur among young people who have cuts or wounds or who have close contact with one another, such as members of a sports team.

What does a CA-MRSA infection look like?

It can resemble a regular staph infection that looks like a pimple or boils.



Source: J Am Board Fam Pract © 2004 American Board of Family Practice

How serious are Staph Infections?

Most Staph skin infections are minor and may be easily treated. Staph also may cause more serious infections, such as infections of the bloodstream, surgical sites, or pneumonia. Sometimes, a Staph infection may worsen. It is important to contact your doctor if your infection does not get better.

How are Staph infections treated?

Treatment for a Staph skin infection may include taking an antibiotic specific to Staph infection or having a doctor drain the infected area. If you are given an antibiotic, be sure to take all of the doses, even if the infection is getting better, unless your doctor tells you to stop taking it. Do not share antibiotics with other people or save them to use later.

People with staph infections, including MRSA infections, do not need to avoid public settings like schools and offices if skin lesions can be adequately covered.

How do I keep Staph infections from spreading?

- Wash your hands often or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Keep your cuts and scrapes clean and cover them with bandages
- Do not touch other people’s cuts or bandages
- Do not share personal items like towels or razors