

# MRSA

## Inpatient Information Leaflet



**This leaflet explains about your MRSA result.**

**This leaflet does not replace a discussion between you and your doctor.**

## **What is MRSA?**

MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus) is a type of bacteria resistant to a group of antibiotics.

It can live harmlessly on your skin, in your nose or in wounds. When MRSA is detected from a swab taken, and the patient has no signs of infection, this is referred to as colonisation. Meaning that the bacteria is present but not causing an infection.

When a person with MRSA has a procedure that breaks the skin (e.g. an operation), or has a wound or catheter, the MRSA can enter the body and cause infection. This can lead to more severe infection or illness.

## **I have been told I am MRSA positive, what does this mean?**

This means that the MRSA bacteria has been found on your body via a recent or historic swab/ specimen.

MRSA can be passed on to other people in the same hospital or ward, despite you having no symptoms.

This means that if you are found to be MRSA positive, you may need to have some treatment to remove the MRSA. You may also be asked to stay in your own room or restrict your movement around the ward to prevent MRSA spreading to others.

MRSA does not harm healthy people; this includes pregnant women and children.

## How can MRSA be treated?

The usual treatment for MRSA colonisation is to have an antibacterial skin wash all over the body and hair. An antibiotic ointment is usually prescribed for the nose. This course of treatment usually lasts for five days.

If a patient has an infection caused by MRSA then antibiotics are required.

You do not need to stay in hospital just because you are MRSA positive. Once you are fit enough to be discharged, your treatment may be stopped.

## How will I know if the MRSA has gone?

After treatment, more swabs or a specimen will be taken from your nose and body. If you have a wound this will be swabbed. If you have a catheter, a sample of urine may be taken.

Once the sample results show no MRSA, then the bacteria has been removed. It is often necessary to take more than one set of specimens, to be sure that the MRSA has been fully removed.

## How can I make sure that I don't spread MRSA to other people?

The amount of isolation needed for each person may be different and your doctor or nurse will explain what will be necessary for you.

One of the best ways to prevent spread of MRSA is to remain in your own room restrict your movement around the ward.

The staff on the ward will wear gloves and aprons and ensure they are cleaning their hands regularly to prevent the MRSA being spread by them when they are caring for you.

Visitors should keep cuts covered with a waterproof dressing and ensure they clean their hands before entering and leaving the ward.

Visitors do not need to wear gloves and aprons unless they are having direct personal contact.



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