Patient Information

Clinical Center
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

MRSA/ORSA (methicillin/oxacillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus)

What is MRSA/ORSA?

MRSA/ORSA stands for methicillin/oxacillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus.

Staphylococcus, or "staph" is a bacterium normally found on our skin. MRSA (also called ORSA) is a type of staph that resists treatment by antibiotics such as methicillin or oxacillin.

How can someone get MRSA/ORSA?

You can get MRSA in the community or in a hospital from someone else with MRSA. It is spread by close contact with that person or by touching contaminated things in their surroundings. You can also get MRSA if staph on your skin becomes resistant to antibiotics that you are taking.

MRSA can be on our bodies without causing infection (called "colonization"). But when it does cause infection, it can be difficult to treat.

What do I need to know?

You

- Read *Patient Information: Hand Hygiene*
- Read *Patient Information: Contact Isolation*
- You will be on contact isolation at the hospital to stop your MRSA from accidentally spreading to other people.
- You must follow the directions given in the the *Contact Isolation* and *Hand Hygiene* information sheets.

Your visitors

All visitors must follow the directions given in the *Contact Isolation* and *Hand Hygiene* information sheets.

What will my healthcare staff do?

Staff will wear gloves, and sometimes a gown, when they are in your room and caring for you.

How do I get rid of MRSA?

- If you have an infection, the doctor will treat it. If you are colonized with MRSA, it may go away without treatment.
- MRSA on hands can be removed by good hand hygiene.
- MRSA on things in your surroundings can be killed by cleaning with disinfectant.

How long will I be in isolation?

You will be on isolation until lab tests show that the MRSA is gone.

Questions?

Feel free to talk to your nurse, doctor, or call the Hospital Epidemiology Service at 301-496-2209.

This information is prepared specifically for persons taking part in clinical research at the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center and may not apply to patients elsewhere. If you have questions about the information presented here, talk to a member of your health-care team.

Products/resources named serve as examples and do not imply endorsement by NIH. The fact that a certain product/resource is not named does not imply that such product/resource is unsatisfactory.

National Institutes of Health Clinical Center
Bethesda, MD 20892

Questions about the Clinical Center?
9/08