If I have a Staph or MRSA infection, how can I prevent from spreading it to others?

- Keep infections covered and clean. This is especially important for infections that continue to produce pus or to drain material.
- Follow your health care providers instructions on proper care of the wound.
- Wash hands after touching infected skin and bandages. Put disposable wastes (e.g., bandages, dressings) in separate trash bag and close bag tightly before throwing it into a regular garbage.
- Advise family and other close contacts to wash their hands frequently.
- Disinfect all non-clothing (and non-disposable) items that come in contact with the wound with a solution of one tablespoon household bleach mixed with one quart of water (must be prepared fresh each day) or a phenol-containing store-bought product.

- Wash linens and cloths that become soiled with hot water and laundry detergent. Drying clothes in a hot dryer also helps kill bacteria.

www.arztol.com

<u>For more Information</u>:

California Department of Public Health, MRSA for Athletes: What You Need to Know
http://www.cdph.ca.gov/healthinfo/discond/Documents/CAMRSAForAthletes.pdf

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Questions and Answers about MRSA
http://www.cdc.gov/Features/MRSAinSchools/

Sonoma County Department of Health Services, Public Health Division, Disease Control
http://www.sonoma-county.org/MRSA

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MRSA

Methicillin-Resistant Staphlococcus Aureus

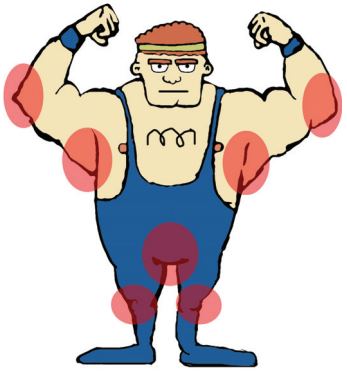
In California

Caring For Yourself & Your Family

A publication of the Sonoma County Department of Health Services

What is Staph?

Staphylococcus aureus (staph) are bacteria that many healthy people carry on their skin or in their nose. About 25% to 30% of people in the United States carry staph in their nose, but it does not make them sick. Staph can also be carried in the armpit, groin, rectum or genital area.



Most staph infections are minor and can be treated without antibiotics. However, staph can sometimes cause serious infections like pneumonia, blood or joint infections, and deep skin infections.

What is MRSA?

Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) is a type of staph that is not killed by penicillin and similar antibiotics. About 1 out of every 100 people carries MRSA without making them sick. In California over half of all the staph infections are caused by MRSA. MRSA infections may not look any different than those caused by ordinary staph.

What do Staph and MRSA infections look like?

- Sores that look and feel like spider bites (but are not spider bites)
- Red painful bumps under the skin, called boils or abscesses
- A cut that is swollen, hot and filled with pus
- Blisters filled with fluid or red skin with a honey-colored crust (usually on the face)
- Red, warm, firm skin area that is painful and getting larger.

If you think you may have a MRSA/Staph infection; please consult your health care provider immediately.

How are infections treated?

Treatment of a Staph infection may require a doctor draining the infection and/or taking antibiotics. If you are given an antibiotic, be sure to take all of the doses, even if the infection is getting better, unless your doctor directs you otherwise. Do not share with other people or save them to use later.

How can I protect myself from becoming infected?

- Keep hands clean by washing thoroughly with soap and water.
- Keep abrasions clean and covered with a clean bandage until healed.

Frequent hand washing is very important and the act of washing is more important than the type of soap.

- Do not share personal items such as razors, washcloths or towels.
- Avoid skin-to skin contact with persons who have skin infections.