

Just Clean Your Hands

Before:

- ◆ Using the toilet.
- ◆ Leaving your room.
- ◆ Visiting in hospital.
- ◆ Eating or touching food.



After:

- ◆ Using the toilet.
- ◆ Contact with any body fluids like blood, urine or vomit.
- ◆ Blowing your nose, sneezing, coughing, or using a tissue.
- ◆ Handling garbage.
- ◆ Touching any hospital equipment.
- ◆ Visiting a patient.
- ◆ Attending therapy or clinic.
- ◆ Touching an animal or pet.
- ◆ Removing gloves and gowns.

Use Hand Sanitizer:

- ◆ When your hands are not visibly soiled.
- ◆ Apply one to two pumps of product to the palm of one hand.
- ◆ Rub your hands together; ensuring all surfaces are covered until your hands are dry (this should take at least 15 seconds).

Hand Washing:

- ◆ Wet your hands with warm running water and then soap.
- ◆ Lather and rub all surfaces of your hands and wrists for at least 15 seconds.
- ◆ Rinse thoroughly.
- ◆ Pat your hands dry with paper towel and then use the paper towel to turn off taps, and open the washroom door.
- ◆ Apply lotion to hands if they become dry.

The most important practice to prevent the spread of germs is good hand hygiene!

Thank you
for your help and cooperation

This brochure provides basic general information only and is to be used as a guide, not as a complete resource on the subject.

If you have any further questions, please ask your physician, nurse, infection control practitioner or local Public Health.

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Patient & Family
Information

*Methicillin-resistant
Staphylococcus aureus
(MRSA)*

Providence
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Infection Control Services

What is Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA?)

MRSA is a type of bacteria; you may also hear it referred to as an Antibiotic Resistant Organism (ARO). This particular bacteria has developed resistance to most of the antibiotics that are commonly used to kill it, including Methicillin and Cloxacillin. This bacteria is often found in the nose and perianal area, and sometimes wounds.

MRSA is very hardy in the environment and can survive on hard surfaces for quite some time. MRSA can be easily removed from the hands with good hand hygiene.

Who gets MRSA?

- ◆ Anyone can get MRSA.
- ◆ Those who have been prescribed antibiotics to treat a Staphylococcus infection in the past are more likely to develop MRSA.
- ◆ Anyone who has been in a healthcare facility for more than 12 hours in the past 12 months is at risk for getting MRSA.

Colonization versus infection

- ◆ Many bacteria live on and in the body without causing disease or infection. This is known as colonization and does not require treatment. MRSA can colonize the nose, the skin and the respiratory tract.
- ◆ Under the right conditions, MRSA can cause infection in the respiratory tract, in surgical sites, wounds and/or in the bloodstream.

How is MRSA spread?

MRSA is spread from one person to another simply by touching.

- ◆ Bacteria may be picked up from the environment on your hands and then touching someone or something else.
- ◆ Objects shared between patients without proper cleaning can spread MRSA.

Contact Precautions and Hand Hygiene are used to prevent spread in the hospital when MRSA colonization or infection is identified.

What will be different about my care?

- ◆ You may be moved to a private room or a room with someone else with MRSA if no private room is available.
- ◆ A Contact Precautions sign will be placed on your door to remind others who enter your room about the additional precautions.
- ◆ People who care for you or visit you in hospital will be required to wear gowns and gloves to prevent spread to other patients, and themselves.
- ◆ People leaving your room must always remove their gown and gloves, and then clean their hands.
- ◆ Before leaving your room you should *Just Clean Your Hands*, and wear a clean change of clothing.
- ◆ Children should not visit in your patient room while you are on isolation, unless they are old enough to understand and follow the precautions.
- ◆ Sometimes hospital staff and your visitors will also wear a mask if the MRSA is

in your respiratory tract and you are coughing.

- ◆ Family and visitors should not use patient washrooms.

What do I need to do at home?

Although the spread of MRSA at home is of little risk, some measures should be taken to protect your family:

- ◆ GOOD HAND HYGIENE!
- ◆ *Just Clean Your Hands* before you touch or eat food. Everyone in the household should follow this practice.
- ◆ Anyone providing close personal care, involving contact with wounds, urine or faeces, must clean their hands afterwards.
- ◆ Clean your hands carefully before and after using the toilet.
- ◆ Clean your hands after you cough, sneeze or handle a tissue.
- ◆ No special precautions are required for visitors to your home.

Always tell your physician, nurses, paramedics, or other care providers that you have had MRSA. This helps prevent spread to other patients.

Avoiding development of resistant bacteria

- ◆ Finish all antibiotics prescribed by your physician.
- ◆ Never give someone else antibiotics that have been prescribed for you.