

## What should I do at home?

Here are some tips that you can use to limit the risk to others:

- Do not touch open wounds on your body. If you must change a bandage make sure you wash your hands before and after.
- Do not share towels or care items like toothbrushes, washcloths, or razors.
- Anyone who cares for you should wash their hands when they are done.
- Your clothes can be washed in the same manner as everyone else in the household.
- No special cleaning of items in your home is needed, like tables, counters, or dishes. MRSA and many other germs are easily killed by common household cleaners.
- The fact that you have had MRSA is private. It is your choice to share this information with your friends and family.
- Always tell your doctor or nurse that you have had MRSA so that they can take extra precautions. This will help them choose the right drug if you get sick with an infection.

## How long will I have MRSA?

Once you have had MRSA the chances that you will have it again are very high.

When MRSA lives on your skin it becomes normal for you.

Sometimes your test results will show MRSA and sometimes they won't. But knowing that you have had MRSA will help your doctor get you the right drug faster if you do get an infection.

If you are not sick with an infection then you do not need to be treated. We will continue using gowns and gloves when you come to the hospital.

**COMPASSION** is our  
**PASSION**

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# MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant Staph Aureus)

Patient  
Information  
Pamphlet



 **WINDSOR  
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HOSPITAL**

OUTSTANDING CARE – NO EXCEPTIONS!

## What is MRSA?

*Staphylococcus aureus* (S. aureus) is a germ that lives on the skin, nose, mouth, or rectal area of healthy people. It can cause an infection if it gets into places where it is not normally found, like through a cut in your skin or into your lungs. Some types of S. aureus have become resistant to the drugs that are most often used to treat infections. This is called methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus or MRSA.

If your normal body defenses have become weak then you are more likely to have MRSA living on your skin. This will not make you sick and does not need to be treated. Many people have MRSA and don't know about it. If MRSA starts to cause an infection then it does need treatment.

Many patients in hospital get tested to see if they have MRSA. A swab of the nose, wounds and rectal area are used for testing. This testing helps staff to know what types of extra precautions they need to take.

## How is MRSA spread?

MRSA is spread from one person to another by touching. This could be from touching a person who has MRSA living on their skin or items in their room. Hands are the most common way MRSA gets around.



## Who is at risk of having MRSA?

### If you have ever had any of the following you are at risk of having MRSA:

- Have had MRSA in the past
- Spent time in a hospital or nursing home.
- Spent time in a room or lived with someone who had MRSA.
- Your body's defenses are weak due to medicine or illness like cancer or kidney disease.
- Have a device like a catheter, drain, feeding tube, PICC line.
- Have nursing care at home.
- Live in a residence, shelter or group home.

### What happens when I am in the hospital?

All staff working in the hospital are trained in ways to stop the spread of germs and this includes MRSA.

The most important way to stop the spread of germs is by keeping our hands clean. Soap and water or alcohol rub may be used to clean hands. You will be able to find sinks and alcohol rub all over the hospital.

## This is what to expect if you have MRSA:

- You will be placed in a room by yourself or with someone who has had MRSA before.
- Staff will use extra items when they care for you.
- A gown will be worn when they enter your room or bed space. This stops staff from picking up MRSA on their clothing. Gloves will be used at times to stop the spread of germs on their hands.
- A sign will be placed on your door to remind others to wear a gown and gloves.
- An alert will be placed in your hospital record. This reminds us about the extra precautions we may need to take each time we see you.
- Everyone who leaves your room must clean their hands well.
- You must clean your hands before you leave your room and may be asked to put on a clean hospital gown.
- You do not ever need to wear gloves. This makes it hard to clean your hands at the right times.
- Your family and friends will need to wear a gown. They only need to wear gloves if they are going to care for you, like take you to the toilet or give you medicine.