

MRSA: Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact: The Infection Prevention and Control Team, York Telephone: 01904 725860, York Hospital or Scarborough Telephone: 01723 342395, Scarborough Hospital

What is MRSA?

MRSA is an antibiotic resistant strain of a common germ called Staphylococcus aureus. Most people have Staphylococcus aureus on their skin from time to time and remain healthy. This is known as being a 'carrier'.

Some people in hospital particularly those with open wounds, drips, drains, and catheters are more vulnerable to becoming infected by Staphylococcus aureus. Although MRSA is no more dangerous than other Staphylococcus aureus, infections with MRSA are harder to treat because special antibiotics must be used.

It is important to remember that MRSA holds no problems for those of us who are fit and well. This information sheet explains what it means to be a carrier of MRSA.

If you are found to be carrying MRSA, the following changes to your care will be made:

- We will make every effort to nurse you in a single room. We may ask you to restrict your movements to mostly inside your room to protect those patients who are ill and are at a greater risk from MRSA.
- All staff must carry out hand cleansing before and after giving you care. • All staff visiting your room will wear plastic aprons when providing direct hands-on care.

- You will need treatment to reduce the level of MRSA on your body. This includes a nasal ointment and body wash.
- If you are still in hospital following treatment swabs will be taken from your nose, throat, groin area, invasive devices, catheter sites and any open wounds to find out if the treatment has worked.
- Your bed linen, towels and face cloths will be changed daily. Your nightwear or day clothes need to be changed also.
- Your own laundry should be washed at home. Wash separately in the washing machine on the hottest wash the clothes will withstand.
- We will place an alert on your electronic medical records. This will remind staff that you have been a carrier of MRSA so that if you are readmitted to the Trust, you will be given appropriate antibiotics if required and managed appropriately.

To minimise the risk associated with carrying MRSA on your skin you need to use one of the following nasal treatments:

Nasal Creams Please read the leaflets accompanying the products and seek advice from your G.P. if you are allergic or hypersensitive to any of the ingredients. You will need only one of the following preparations:

Mupirocin (Bactroban) Nasal Cream Apply this ointment to the front, inside areas of both your nostrils two times a day for five days.

Naseptin ** ⚠ Naseptin contains Arachis (peanut) oil. If you are allergic to peanut or soya, do not use Naseptin. ** Apply this ointment to the front, inside area of both of your nostrils four times a day for ten days.

Skin Washes

If skin irritation develops, or any other allergic reaction, wash off immediately and contact your G.P. or the Infection Prevention Team on: York 01904 725860 Scarborough 01723 342395 You will need only one of the following preparations:

Chlorhexidine Gluconate 4% Skin Cleanser

- Ensure that your hair and body are totally wet before applying the Chlorhexidine Gluconate 4%
- Pour the solution onto a damp cloth before applying to your skin once daily. Pay particular attention to your hair line, nose, genital area, groin, and armpits. Use a clean cloth every day.
- Wash using the solution for at least 60 seconds, then thoroughly rinse and dry your skin

- Use the wash on the days you take the nasal treatment **Hair Washing:** Use Chlorhexidine Gluconate 4% as a shampoo and wash your hair on the first and every third day. Avoid contact with your eyes. Use on wet hair and leave for one minute and rinse off. You can use your own shampoo and conditioner afterwards if you wish.

Octenisan Body Wash

Octenisan body wash is gentle and can be used by people with sensitive skin. Do not use Octenisan in the bath – either shower or have a strip wash.

- Ensure that your hair and body are totally wet before applying the Octenisan body wash
- Pour the solution onto a damp cloth before applying to your skin once daily. Pay particular attention to your hair line, nose, genital area, groin, and armpits. Use a clean cloth every day.
- Leave on for at least 60 seconds, then thoroughly rinse and dry your skin
- Use the wash on the days you take the nasal treatment

Hair Washing: Use Octenisan or chlorhexidine as a shampoo and wash your hair on the first and every third day. Avoid contact with your eyes. Use undiluted on wet hair like a shampoo, leave for 60 seconds and rinse off. You can use your own shampoo and conditioner afterwards if you wish.

Visitors, relatives, and carers Visiting a patient with MRSA can continue as normal. MRSA does not usually cause a problem to anyone unless they are ill themselves. However, the following should be considered;

- Wash your hands and apply hand sanitizer before entering and on leaving the patient's room or bay.
- You do not need to wear apron and gloves during the visit, unless you are involved in giving care to the patient, such as washing them.

What will happen when you go home?

- If you are to be discharged imminently, it may be decided treatment will not be started, but you will require screening on future admissions.
- If you no longer carry MRSA, then no further treatment is required.
- If you are still carrying MRSA, you will still be able to go home and finish the course of treatment at home.
- If you need treatment by the district nurse, this will not be affected.
- If you are concerned that you have relatives who are at risk, please speak to a nurse. If there is something you do not understand in this leaflet, or you wish to discuss it further, ask the nurse in charge to contact the Infection Prevention Team.

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact: The York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE or telephone 01904 725860, Scarborough Hospital, Woodlands Drive, Scarborough, YO12 6QL or telephone 01723 342395.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website: www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

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