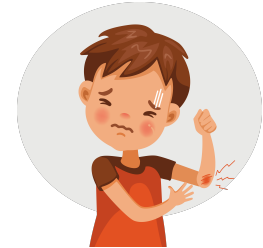


Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) Fact Sheet

What is it?

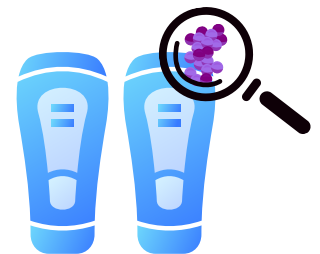
Methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) is a type of bacteria. Even medicine prescribed by your doctor (antibiotics) has a hard time fighting off MRSA. MRSA can cause skin and other types of infections. Athletes and school students are at higher risk of getting MRSA, because of close contact and sharing personal items.



How does it spread?

MRSA can spread by contact with sick people or items that carry the bacteria. You can get a MRSA infection if you:

- Have direct contact with another person's infection.
- Share personal items, such as towels or razors, that have touched infected skin.
- Touch surfaces or items, like used bandages, that had contact with MRSA.



How do I know if I have it?

MRSA can affect different parts of the body. MRSA is a staph infection. Most staph skin infections look like a bump or sore on the skin that may be:

- Red
- Swollen
- Painful
- Warm to the touch
- Full of pus or other liquid

You may also have a fever.



How can I protect myself?

- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Clean your body regularly, especially after exercise.
- Do **not** share personal items, like towels and razors.
- Wash clothes after each use.
- Clean your hands after touching dirty clothes.
- Clean exercise equipment, like mats and weight benches.
- Keep cuts, scrapes, and wounds clean and covered until healed.



How should I take care of myself or someone who has MRSA?

If you or a family member have MRSA, you will need to see a doctor. You will also need to cover your wounds with clean, dry bandages until healed. Your doctor will guide you on how to take care of your MRSA infection.



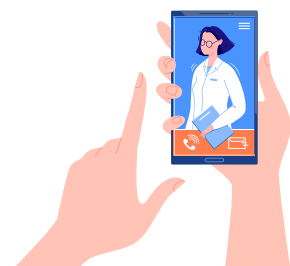
Your doctor may:

- Drain the infection. Do **not** drain, pick, or scratch the infection yourself because it can get worse or spread to others.
- Prescribe an antibiotic. Be sure to take all of the medicine (even if the infection is getting better), unless your doctor tells you to stop taking it.

When should I call a doctor?

You should contact your doctor right away if you or a family member have symptoms of a MRSA infection. A MRSA infection can become serious. The sooner you are treated, the better.

Infants can get serious MRSA infections in their diaper area. Please contact your doctor if you see a pimple in your infant's diaper area that is big and red.



To learn more, visit the [MRSA webpage](http://www.sdepi.org) at www.sdepi.org.

