

Can I Get Rid of ca- MRSA?

Once the infection is cleared, it is recommended that you try and eliminate the ca-MRSA on your skin or in your nose, to prevent these same infections occurring in the future. This treatment is different to the antibiotics you may have taken. It is called decolonisation.

Decolonisation

Decolonisation is a process whereby ca-MRSA is treated on all skin surfaces. It is recommended that those infected (and if directed, their household members) wash daily with a soap containing 4% Chlorhexidine or 1% Triclosan. These products are available "over the counter" through pharmacies. Washing daily with this product helps to reduce the amount of ca-MRSA on the skin surface.



Your doctor can prescribe an ointment called Mupirocin which is placed in the nose three times per day for 5 days. In addition, washing bed linen and clothes in hot water with a regular detergent and cleaning hard surfaces (benches, floors, toilets, bathrooms) with a product containing detergent is highly recommended. It is also recommended to vacuum carpets and soft furnishings weekly.

You should discuss decolonisation treatment with your GP; a more in depth plan may be required and they will also discuss whether decolonisation is appropriate for your particular situation. They may recommend that other household members also be tested for ca-MRSA.

A guide for patients, their friends and family members.

If you have any further questions, please talk to a doctor or nurse.

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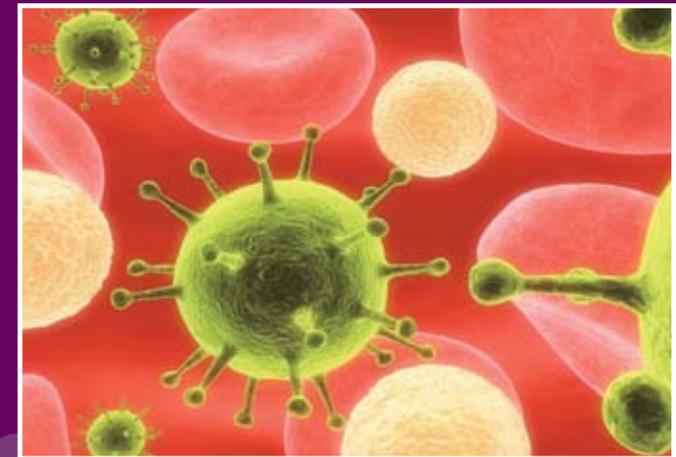
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Community- acquired Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (ca- MRSA)

Information for people and their close contacts who have been diagnosed with community-acquired MRSA.



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What is *Staphylococcus aureus* and MRSA?

Everybody has a variety of bacteria (germs) on their skin. About half of the adult population carry, either on their skin or in their nose or mouth, a bacteria called *Staphylococcus aureus* (Staph). There are many different types of Staph and most of the time it lives and multiplies on the body without any problems.

Under some circumstances Staph can enter the body through broken skin or mucous membranes and cause infection that may require treatment with antibiotics.

Some types of Staph are difficult to treat as they have become resistant to commonly used antibiotics. When this occurs it is described as **Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus** (MRSA) commonly called "Golden Staph" and is generally seen in people who have been in hospital.

ca- MRSA (community- acquired MRSA) is a type of Staph strain that is known to spread easily amongst household members. It can cause moderate to severe infection in otherwise healthy people. ca-MRSA has been detected in people who have never had any contact with hospitals.



How is ca-MRSA Spread?

ca- MRSA is usually spread from person to person through direct contact. This can occur when people have close skin to skin contact or potentially through sharing clothes, bedding or towels. Sporting clubs and gyms are experiencing issues with ca-MRSA through the use of shared equipment and towels.



Signs and Symptoms of ca-MRSA?

ca-MRSA strains most commonly cause skin and soft tissue infections however more serious infections can occur if ca-MRSA enters the blood stream (from an existing skin infection) or the lungs (following a respiratory illness).

Common signs of skin infection include:

- Redness, swelling, pain, heat and the presence of pus. The lumps often have the initial appearance of an insect bite which can progress rapidly to become boils and abscesses that frequently require surgical drainage. Do not squeeze or 'pop' these spots.

Signs and symptoms of a serious infection can include:

- Feeling generally unwell, high fever, chills, shivers, shortness of breath or weakness and dizziness.

What Your Doctor May Do Now

Any infection caused by ca-MRSA must be appropriately treated by a doctor. Treatment may include lancing a boil or abscess and allowing the pus to drain and prescribing appropriate antibiotics. Once treatment is commenced, you should see improvement within 48 hours –if you do not, you need to seek prompt medical attention.



Some Good Ideas to Prevent ca-Mrsa

- Shower daily, wash your clothes regularly in hot water and dry in the sun where able
- At gymnasiums & sporting clubs always wipe down any shared equipment before and after use.
- Use your own towel at sporting facilities and wash it in hot water at home
- Do not share clothes
- Cover any skin breaks with bandaids or dressings whilst playing sport or when in close contact with others.

