

## What Will Happen at Home?

If you have MRSA at the time of discharge from hospital, the chance of spreading the bacteria to your family is small.

But we recommend that you practice the following:

- Wash your hands frequently either with soap and water or a hand sanitizer with alcohol content greater than 60 per cent.
- Wash your hands only with soap and water after using the toilet.
- Anyone assisting you with going to the toilet should wash his or her hands after contact with you.
- Make sure that anyone who uses the same bathroom washes his or her hands well afterwards.
- Clothing may be laundered in the same manner as the rest of the household laundry.
- No special cleaning of furniture or items (e.g. dishes) in the home is required.
- Always tell your physician, paramedics, nurses or other care providers that you have MRSA. This helps prevent spread to others.

## Good Hand Hygiene Practices:

Remind all staff and visitors to practice good hand hygiene before and after they touch you.

Remind your nurse or doctor to demonstrate proper hand hygiene techniques (15 seconds of soap and running water OR rubbing in waterless alcohol hand rub until hands are dry).

You need to clean your hands:

- After using the bathroom
- After blowing your nose
- Before eating and drinking
- Before and after you touch your dressing or wounds
- Before you leave your room
- Wash your hands with soap and water if visibly soiled



*Infection Prevention & Control 2010*

# Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)

## Patient and Visitor Information

*at St. Joseph's Health Centre, Toronto*

ST. JOSEPH'S  
HEALTH CENTRE TORONTO

ST. JOSEPH'S  
HEALTH CENTRE TORONTO

# Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)

## Patient and Visitor Information

### What is MRSA?

Staphylococcus aureus is a bacteria that lives on the skin and mucous membranes of healthy people. When Staphylococcus aureus becomes resistant to certain antibiotics it is called Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus or MRSA.

MRSA can also live in the nose and on the skin of some individuals. People that carry the bacteria but do not get sick are known as carriers. If people get sick from MRSA, there are a few antibiotics that can be used to treat them.

MRSA does not usually pose a problem to healthy individuals.

### How is MRSA Spread?

MRSA is spread from one person to another by contact, usually by touching contaminated material excreted by a carrier, infected person or from

touching articles, equipment or furniture contaminated by MRSA. MRSA can live on hands and on objects in the environment for days to months.

### Why are Precautions Needed?

Precautions are needed in a hospital to prevent the spread of the bacteria to other patients, especially those who are already weak from being sick.

### What Will Happen if I Am a Carrier of MRSA?

1. You will be moved to a single room.
2. A sign will be placed on your door to remind others who enter your room about the special precautions.
3. People caring for you will wear a long-sleeve gown and gloves to prevent carrying the bacteria to other patients.
4. Under supervision, you can leave your room as long as you wash your hands and don't go into another patient's room.
5. You will be asked to wash your

hands after using the toilet and every time before you leave the room.

6. All persons entering and leaving your room will be required to WASH THEIR HANDS, including family and visitors. An alcohol hand rub or hand sanitizer may be used in place of soap and water after brief casual contact.

### What About Family and Visitors?

Your family and visitors should not assist other patients with their personal care as this may cause the bacteria to spread.

All family and visitors should wash their hands before leaving the room. Family members or visitors who provide direct care for you will be required to wear an isolation gown and gloves. If a family member or visitor is not providing care for you, then a gown and gloves are not required. Hand washing before leaving the room is sufficient.