

# When You Have MRSA

## (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus)



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### What is MRSA?

MRSA is short for Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus. Staphylococcus Aureus is the name of a type of germ. 'Methicillin resistant' means these germs cannot be cured by the most common antibiotics used to treat them.

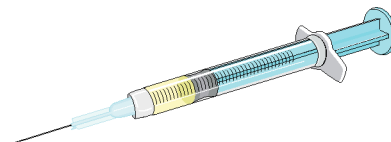
You have been placed in contact isolation because you have these germs.

The main places you will find these germs is in your nose and on your skin.

### How is it spread to others?

Anyone can get these germs – patients, doctors, nurses or visitors.

- You can pass these germs to someone else by not washing your hands.
- They can be passed from any thing in your room (like bed sheets, equipment, water pitchers, bed rails, chairs) to other people.
- You can get MRSA outside the hospital in places such as clinics, nursing homes, dialysis centers and jails. Many people in the community are MRSA carriers (they carry the germ in their bodies, but are not sick from it).
- MRSA can also be spread when more than one person uses the same needle for illegal drugs.



### What happens if I have MRSA?

- Some people have the germ without having any problems.
- If it gets into your blood, it can cause you to be very ill.
- This germ can also get into your wounds or lungs and slow down healing.

(over)

## While you are in the hospital

- **Anything** that goes into your room must be disinfected or bagged before leaving your room. If you must send something home, ask the nurse how it should be done.
- When you have MRSA you should wear a clean gown and wash your hands before you leave your room.
- Wash your hands when you come back to your room.
- **Tell any** visitor entering your hospital room that they should:
  - Read the sign on the door.
  - Check with a nurse, if they have any questions.
  - Wash their hands, or use alcohol rub on them before leaving.



## How to protect your family when you go home

- Wash your hands before and after you change your dressings.
- Put your dressings in a plastic bag. Tie off the bag and put it in the trash.
- Wash your hands after using the bathroom.
- Wash your hands before preparing any food.
- Wash your hands before eating.
- You do not need to wear gloves and gowns when you go home.

