



MRSA

WHAT IS MRSA?

MRSA STANDS FOR METHICILLIN-RESISTANT *Staphylococcus aureus*. *Staphylococcus aureus* IS A TYPE OF BACTERIA WITH LOTS OF DIFFERENT STRAINS. WHAT MAKES MRSA DIFFERENT FROM OTHER STAPH INFECTIONS IS THAT IT HAS BUILT UP IMMUNITY TO THE ANTIBIOTICS (MEDICATIONS) THAT DOCTORS USUALLY USE TO TREAT STAPH INFECTIONS, SO THE MEDICATIONS DON'T WORK.

HOW IS MRSA SPREAD?

MRSA MOST OFTEN IS SPREAD FROM PERSON TO PERSON BY DIRECT CONTACT. FOR EXAMPLE, IN MEDICAL SETTINGS, MRSA IS MOST COMMONLY SPREAD FROM PATIENT TO PATIENT BY A HEALTH CARE WORKER'S HANDS.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF MRSA?

MRSA GENERALLY STARTS AS SMALL RED BUMPS THAT RESEMBLE PIMPLES, BOILS OR SPIDER BITES. THESE CAN QUICKLY TURN INTO DEEP, PAINFUL ABSCESSES THAT REQUIRE DRAINING BY A DOCTOR. SOMETIMES BACTERIA REMAIN CONFINED TO THE SKIN. IN A FEW CASES, MRSA CAN SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE BODY AND CAUSE PROBLEMS LIKE BLOOD AND JOINT INFECTIONS --- ALTHOUGH COMPLICATION LIKE THESE ARE VERY RARE IN HEALTHY PEOPLE.

CAN MRSA BE TREATED?

MRSA INFECTIONS CAN REQUIRE DIFFERENT MEDICATIONS AND APPROACHES TO TREATMENT THAN OTHER STAPH INFECTIONS. DOCTORS MAY PRESCRIBE MEDICATIONS FOR SOME PEOPLE WITH MRSA INFECTIONS.

WHAT CAN I DO TO PROTECT MYSELF FROM GETTING MRSA?

TO PROTECT YOURSELF, WASH HANDS OFTEN, IF YOU HAVE A CUT OR BROKEN SKIN, KEEP IT CLEAN AND COVERED WITH A BANDAGE, AND DON'T SHARE RAZORS, TOWELS, UNIFORMS, OR OTHER ITEMS THAT COME IN CONTACT WITH BARE SKIN.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO HELP PREVENT MRSA?

PEOPLE WITH INFECTIONS CAN HELP PREVENT FUTURE BACTERIA FROM BECOMING RESISTANT TO ANTIBIOTICS BY TAKING THE MEDICATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN PRESCRIBED FOR THEM IN THE FULL AMOUNT UNTIL THE PRESCRIPTION IS FINISHED (UNLESS A DOCTOR TELLS THEM IT'S OK TO STOP EARLY). GERMS THAT ARE ALLOWED TO BE AROUND AFTER INCOMPLETE TREATMENT OF AN INFECTION ARE MORE LIKELY TO BECOME RESISTANT TO MEDICATIONS.