

Meticillin- Sensitive Staphylococcus aureus

Patient Information Leaflet

Infection Control



This leaflet aims to answer some of the most commonly

What is MSSA?

Meticillin-sensitive Staphylococcus aureus is a type of bacteria (germ) which lives harmlessly on the skin and in the noses, in about one third of people. People who have MSSA on their bodies or in their noses are said to be colonised.

However MSSA colonisation usually causes them no problems, but can cause an infection when it gets the opportunity to enter the body. This is more likely to happen in people who are already unwell. MSSA can cause local infections such as abscesses or boils and it can infect any wound that has caused a break in the skin e.g. grazes, surgical wounds.

MSSA can cause serious infections called septicaemia (blood poisoning) where it gets into the bloodstream.

How will I know if I have MSSA?

MSSA is found when swabs from skin, nose or wounds or other specimens such as urine or sputum which are examined in the hospital laboratory. Your nurse will inform you if you have MSSA.

How did I get MSSA?

MSSA may have been in your nose or on your skin before you came into hospital or you may have acquired it since your admission.

How can MSSA spread from person to person?

MSSA can be transferred from person to person via touch. This is the most common mode of spread. It can also be spread via some of the equipment used to care for you during your stay. In hospital as there are many patients in close proximity to one another therefore making the spread of MSSA easier.

How can spread be prevented in hospital?

Hospital staff wear gloves and aprons when caring for you to help minimise the risk of transferring the MSSA to other patients. Hospital staff and visitors must wash their hands thoroughly before and after attending to you, as hand hygiene is an important way of controlling the spread of MSSA. If you have been told that you have MSSA you may be moved to a bay with other people who also have MSSA. This is to protect other patients who may be vulnerable to infection.

What is the treatment?

The topical treatment offered to you significantly reduces the number of MSSA bacteria on your body:

- Nasal ointment for your nose, which will be applied to each nostril three times a day for 5 day
- A disinfectant to wash your hands, face and body with, once a day for 5 days
- A disinfectant to wash your hair at least twice during a 5 day period.

The doctors caring for you may also prescribe antibiotics.

Can MSSA come back?

Yes, it can come back, unfortunately it may not totally go away. If you come into hospital again you will be barrier nursed and given another course of treatment.

Can I have visitors?

MSSA does no harm to healthy people, including pregnant women, children and babies.

It can affect people who have certain long term health conditions but if you have concerns please ask the nurse in charge. The most important thing for you and your visitors to do is to ensure they wash their hands after visiting you so that they do not spread MSSA.

Will I have to stay in hospital longer?

There should be no problem with you being discharged from hospital unless you have a serious infection due to MSSA. If you are on treatment the district nurse may be contacted to ensure it is completed.

If you have any questions about the information you have just read then please do not hesitate to ask the nurse on your ward for further information, or ask your nurse to contact the Infection Prevention team, who will come along to speak to you and answer your questions.

Thank you for your cooperation.

For further information contact
Infection Prevention team

01253 303874

www.hpa.org.uk

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If you'd like a large print, audio, Braille or a translated version of this leaflet then please call **01253 655588**.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Do you need information or advice about NHS services? Do you have concerns about you or your family's healthcare or are seeking a resolution to a problem and cannot get an answer to your questions? PALS is here to listen and support you in whatever way they can to ensure your experience of healthcare services is a positive one.

Tel: **01253 655588** email: **pals@bfwh.nhs.uk**

You can also write to us at:

**PALS, Blackpool Victoria Hospital,
Whinney Heys Road, Blackpool FY3 8NR**

Further information is available on our website:
www.bfwh.nhs.uk

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