

# FACT SHEET

# MRSA

## What is MRSA?

Staphylococcus aureus or “staph” are bacteria that live on the skin and in the nose. They are usually harmless. Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) is a type of staph infection that is resistant to antibiotics that are typically used to treat this disease.

## How is it spread?

MRSA bacteria can spread by touching the infected skin or wound of anyone who has MRSA. It can also be spread by sharing objects such as towels, razors, or athletic equipment with someone who has MRSA.

## What are the symptoms?

Most *S. aureus* skin infections, including MRSA, appear as a bump or infected area on the skin that might be:

- Red
- Swollen
- Painful
- Warm to the touch
- Full of pus or other drainage
- Accompanied by a fever

## How is it prevented?

The best way to prevent MRSA is to practice good hygiene which will help prevent skin infections. Other steps to prevent MRSA include:

- Clean hands often and clean your body regularly, particularly after exercise.
- Keep cuts, scrapes, and wounds clean and covered until healed.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as towels and razors.
- Get care early if you think you have an infection.

## How is it treated?

Since MRSA is resistant to many antibiotics, it can be hard to treat. However, some antibiotics can still successfully cure MRSA infections.

*This fact sheet is for informational purposes only and is not intended for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information contact your health care provider or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).*