

## How Can I Help?

- If you go to another doctor or another hospital, please tell your doctor and nurse or other care givers that you were once on special precautions for MRSA.

## Did you know...

- Hand washing is the most important thing you can do to help minimize your risk of infection.
- All visitors should wash their hands before they visit a patient, and when they leave. Waterless hand wash is located on the walls in all areas of the Hospital.
- Health care providers wash their hands frequently. This very important aspect of health care helps to prevent the spread of infection.

## Final Words

- If you have any questions please speak to your doctor, nurse or call Infection Control.



**Wash your hands  
often and well.**

### For more information...

This information sheet has been prepared by Mount Sinai Hospital's Infection Control Department.

For more information,  
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Department of Infection Control

## Special Isolation Precautions for Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA)

Information for patients  
and visitors



One of your tests has shown that you are carrying bacteria (germs) called MRSA (Methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*). Staff must now take special precautions when taking care of you.

## What is MRSA?

- *Staphylococcus aureus* is a bacteria that normally lives in the nose, rectum and on human skin. It does not cause any harm.
- MRSA is a strain of *Staphylococcus aureus* that is not killed by the usual antibiotics.

## Can MRSA be harmful?

- MRSA germs are not harmful to healthy people, but can cause infections for those who are seriously ill.
- MRSA germs do not cause more serious infections than other germs, but it is more difficult to choose the right antibiotic to treat them. Therefore, it is important to know if someone has MRSA so we can treat it.

## Who might have MRSA?

- People who have been in hospital, rehab facilities, or long term care are more at risk of having MRSA germs.

## I have MRSA. What does this mean for me?

Hospital staff will use special precautions when caring for you. This is necessary to prevent the spread of MRSA to other patients.

- You will be moved into a private room.
- Staff will wear yellow gowns, gloves, and masks.
- A sign will be hung on your door to indicate the type of precautions required.
- It is very important for all staff and visitors to wash their hands when they come in and when they leave your room.
- If you need to go to another part of the Hospital for tests or treatments, you must wash your hands before you leave your room.

## What about family and visitors?

- You may still have visitors. They must wash their hands when they come in and when they leave your room. They do not need to put on gowns, gloves and masks if they do not look after other sick people.

## What will happen when I leave the hospital?

- If you go to another health care facility or if you have services from Home Care, precautions may be taken.

## What about at home?

- MRSA does not spread well outside of the hospital setting. This is because most people who are not in the hospital are healthy and not likely to get infected. Healthy people do not need to worry about getting MRSA.
- Hand washing decreases the risk of spreading infection. Remind everyone to wash their hands often.

## Will this go away?

- It might go away on its own, but your doctor and infection control may order an antibiotic cream to put into your nose and on any wounds you have. This should be used 3 times a day for a week.
- Also, you should wash your body with special liquid soap.
- You may be given oral antibiotics as well. This will help to get rid of the MRSA faster.
- After you finish your treatment, we will swab your nose, rectum, and any wounds for a few weeks to make sure that you have gotten rid of MRSA.