

Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)

Information Sheet for Patients & Visitors



MRSA Explained:

Staphylococcus aureus is bacteria that lives on the skin and mucous membranes of healthy people. Occasionally *S. aureus* can cause an infection. When *S. aureus* develops resistance to certain antibiotics, it is called methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus, or MRSA. MRSA may often be present without any signs or symptoms of an infection (colonized).

How MRSA Is Spread:

MRSA is spread from one person to another by contact, usually on the hands of caregivers. MRSA can be present on the caregiver's hands either from direct contact with a colonized person or from touching articles contaminated by a person with MRSA, such as towels, sheets and wound dressings. MRSA can live on hands and objects in the environment.



Special Precautions for MRSA:

Precautions are taken to stop MRSA from spreading to other patients in the hospital including:

- Special accommodations may be required for infection control purposes.
- A long-sleeved gown and gloves will be worn by everyone who cares for you.
- A sign may be placed on your door to remind others who enter your room about the special precautions.
- The room and the equipment used in the room will be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Everyone must clean their hands before entering and leaving the room.

Family & Visitors Protocols While at St. Mary's:

Your family and visitors will be required to clean their hands with hand sanitizer and wear a long-sleeved gown and gloves while in your room. Before leaving your room, visitors must remove the gloves and gown and dispose of them in the garbage container and/or the laundry hamper located in your room and clean their hand with hand sanitizer. These precautions will help prevent further transmission.

After You Leave St. Mary's:

- Everyone who might help you with your personal care should practice good hand hygiene.
- Everyone should wash hands before making any food and before eating.
- Everyone should wash hands well after using the toilet.
- Clothing may be laundered in the usual manner along with the rest of the household laundry.
- No special cleaning of furniture or items (e.g., dishes) in the home is required.
- If you share a bathroom at home, clean the toilet and sink at least weekly with a household cleanser.
- Always tell your physician, paramedics, nurses, or other care providers that you have MRSA. This helps prevent spread to others.

Good Hand Hygiene Practices:

- After using the bathroom
- After blowing your nose
- Before eating and drinking
- Before you leave your room
- Before and after you touch your dressing or wounds
- When your hands are visibly dirty



Reference:

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/a/2013/aros-screening-testing-surveillance.pdf>

Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee. Annex A – Screening, testing and surveillance for antibiotic-resistant organisms (AROs). Annexed to: Routine Practices and Additional Precautions in All Health Care Settings. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2013