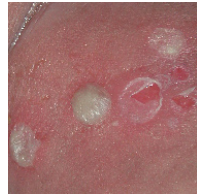


# What is MRSA?

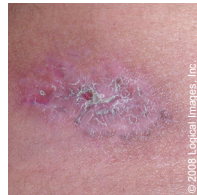
methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*



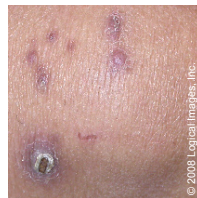
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MRSA is a particular type of “staph” bacteria that can cause a skin infection in an area of injured skin, such as a cut or scrape.

It can be spread by coming into contact with skin or personal items of anyone who has MRSA on their skin.

Infected skin is often red, swollen, and painful and may resemble a pimple, boil, or spider bite, which should prompt a call to the doctor. If diagnosed with a staph infection, return to the doctor if it becomes worse or is not improving with antibiotics.

## The Truth About MRSA

Myth: MRSA is a new threat.

Truth: Though MRSA was previously known as being an infection found in ill people in hospitals, it is now showing up in the general, healthy population. This is known as community-associated MRSA (CA-MRSA).

Myth: People who have staph bacteria, including MRSA, are a threat to everyone.

Truth: Many people have staph bacteria on their skin normally but have no ill effects. While these people, who are said to be colonized, may pass the bacteria to others, simple self-care measures can prevent a MRSA infection as well as spreading to others.

Myth: MRSA is untreatable by antibiotics.

Truth: While resistant to certain antibiotics, most MRSA infections can be treated successfully using alternative antibiotics and/or having the doctor drain and clean the infected area.

Myth: MRSA is a severe threat.

Truth: Although it does happen on occasion, it is still rare for any staph skin infection to become life threatening in a healthy person.

## Preventing MRSA

Because MRSA can be passed to others, it is important to follow these prevention tips:

- Keep personal items personal! Don't share towels, sports equipment, razors, clothes, etc.
- Keep any wound covered and clean until it has fully healed.
- Avoid contact with others' wounds or bandages.
- As a general rule, always maintain good hand-washing habits.
- If you have any questions regarding MRSA or a potential staph infection, contact your physician.