

Patient Records

The fact that you have had MRSA will be recorded in your electronic patient record. This may result in additional tests being done prior to or during any future visits to hospital.

How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?

Infection prevention & control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection prevention & control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. We ask that you, and anyone visiting you, use the hand sanitiser available at the entrance to every ward before coming in to and after leaving the ward. In some situations hands may need to be washed at the sink using soap and water rather than using the hand sanitiser as hand sanitisers are not suitable for use when dealing with patients who have symptoms of diarrhoea.

For infection prevention & control purposes and to keep you safe and well visitors are requested **not** to:

- Visit you if they are unwell
- Sit on your bed or use the patient toilets.
- Touch your wounds, or any medical devices, drips or catheters.

How can I find out more?

Contact the Infection Prevention & Control Department on:

Stoke Mandeville Hospital Tel: 01296 315337

Public Health England Tel: 0344 225 3861 (option 4, option 1)

NHS Choices Website: <http://www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx>

www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk

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MRSA

Patient Information Leaflet

If you require a translation or alternative format of this leaflet please call
Infection Prevention & Control 01296 315337

Safe & compassionate care,

every time

What is MRSA?

(Meticillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*)

Staphylococcus aureus is a common bacterium that is found in the nose and on the skin of many people. This is quite normal and does you no harm. In some patients it can cause common skin infections such as boils. MRSA is a type of *Staphylococcus aureus* that has become resistant to many antibiotics including Meticillin (flucloxacillin). It can affect people in the community e.g. in their own homes, care homes, as well as those in hospital.

Why is it a problem?

A person may get an infection if the bacteria have the opportunity to multiply in their body. Some people are more at risk because they already have an illness or are having an operation. Patients in hospital are more vulnerable to acquiring MRSA infection if they have open wounds e.g. after surgery, urinary catheters or intravenous lines. If the bacteria are resistant to antibiotics the infection may become more difficult to treat. MRSA is no more dangerous than ordinary *Staphylococcus aureus*, but it is resistant to the commonest antibiotics used to treat infection. Therefore, if someone has an infection caused by MRSA, there are a limited number of antibiotics that can be used to treat them.

How is it spread?

Staphylococcus aureus is spread mainly by touch via hands; therefore regular hand washing by carers is essential. This is why carers may wear gloves and aprons while caring for patients in hospital. This will be dependant on your MRSA screening results.

Is it necessary to take swabs?

The nursing staff may need to take swabs from patients to find out where the MRSA is. In some cases it may be necessary to repeat swabs to see if the MRSA is still present.

Will I need special accommodation?

It may be necessary to care for you in a single room whilst in hospital. Sometimes there may not be enough single rooms therefore a "cohort bay" may be used, where patients who are carrying the same organism can be looked after together.

You may also be cared for in a bay with barrier (protective) nursing until a side room is available. The people caring for you will explain what is involved. There are no special requirements once you are at home.

Is MRSA a risk to visitors?

MRSA is rarely a problem for healthy people. It is necessary in some circumstances for visitors to wear gloves and aprons if they are having close contact with patients who are MRSA positive (i.e. helping with washing and dressing). Ward staff will advise visitors. It is important that visitors wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water or use the hand sanitiser when they arrive on the ward and before leaving. They should keep cuts and grazes covered with a dressing/waterproof plaster. Please ask the nurses if you are unsure.

Will it delay my discharge from hospital?

Usually there will be no delay if you are returning to your own home. It should not stop you going into a nursing or residential home, where although you may have a single room, you will be able to mix freely with most other residents. If you need to be transferred to another hospital, you may experience a slight delay as some specialist hospital units may want you to be in a single room. This should not compromise your care in any way.

What happens when I get home?

Family life should continue as normal. MRSA will not affect your sex life and is extremely unlikely to harm healthy people outside hospital, including babies, children and pregnant women. It should not stop you shopping, socialising, visiting friends, etc. or living your life as normal.

- Normal domestic cleaning is adequate. Surfaces and floors should be cleaned/vacuumed regularly.
- Clothing, bedding etc. can be washed as normal in the family washing machine.
- Rubbish can go into the ordinary household waste.
- Community Nurses may need to wear gloves and aprons when providing direct care to you e.g. dressing wounds.
- If you need to be admitted to any hospital in future or have any other contact with a healthcare provider you should tell the staff that you have had MRSA in the past.