

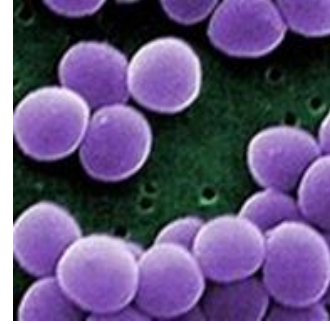
Guidance at a Glance – MRSA

These guidelines support the delivery of care in community and social care settings. This guidance reflects best practice/national guidelines.

KEY POINTS

Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) is a common bacterium that may live harmlessly on the skin and in the nose and throat of a proportion of the population.

MRSA is spread by direct contact with skin, surfaces and equipment. There is no justification for refusing to admit service users with MRSA into any health and social care setting.



Colonisation vs. infection

People who have MRSA on their skin, in their nose etc. but have no clinical signs of infection are said to be colonised. This means that although there is MRSA present it is not causing any problems.

When MRSA starts to cause infection is when it becomes a problem. An MRSA infection can cause abscesses, boils, skin infections and can even cause blood poisoning.

Symptoms:

- Redness of the skin
- swelling
- warmth
- pain
- pus

If it gets further into your body, it can also cause:

- high temperature
- chills
- aches and pains
- dizziness
- confusion



MANAGEMENT OF SOMEONE WITH MRSA

Colonisation – no action usually taken – may be prescribed a course of suppression treatment. The aim of suppression treatment is to reduce the number of MRSA bacteria to a less harmful level. Treatment usually consists of a 5 day course of an antibacterial body wash as well as a nasal ointment

Infection – A course of antibiotics will be prescribed and in some cases suppression treatment may also be given.

- Isolation is not always necessary, if MRSA is in a wound then ensure that it is covered.
- Hand hygiene using liquid soap and warm water is essential for healthcare workers, visitors and service users.
- MRSA bacteria can easily be removed from the service user's room by cleaning at least daily with a detergent or chlorine based disinfectant solution.
- Service users own clothing should be washed at the highest temperature recommended by the manufacturer. Wash them separate to other clothing if preferred.
- Crockery/cutlery should be washed as normal.
- Avoid using shared equipment