

If you have to be admitted to hospital, to avoid transmitting MRSA to other patients, please tell your doctor and the healthcare team who will be looking after you that you are or have been an MRSA carrier

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INFORMATION FOR MRSA-CARRIER PATIENTS



MRSA
CARRIER
PATIENTS

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WHAT IS MRSA?

Staphylococcus aureus is a bacterium that frequently colonises the skin and mucous membranes of humans. It is estimated that 20-40% of adults have Staphylococcus aureus in their nostrils. In certain circumstances, Staphylococcus aureus can cause infections, including relatively benign skin infections (folliculitis, furunculosis) and severe infections (erysipelas, deep abscesses, osteomyelitis, pneumonia, sepsis, endocarditis, etc.).

Shortly after the introduction of penicillin as a therapeutic agent in the 1940s, the first penicillin-resistant strains of Staphylococcus aureus emerged, and this resistance gradually extended to include other classes of commonly used antibiotics.

A distinction is therefore made between:

- Methicillin-sensitive staphylococcus, known as MSSA = methicillin-sensitive Staphylococcus aureus.
- Methicillin-resistant staphylococcus, known as MRSA = methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus.

MSSA and MRSA cause the same types of infection, but the treatment of MRSA infections is complicated by the resistance profile of MRSA, some strains of which have become insensitive to the majority of antibiotics.

This depletion of therapeutic resources is the reason why preventive measures need to be put in place to avoid intra-hospital transmission of MRSA.

Applied systematically, these prevention measures are highly effective, as illustrated in the Netherlands, where the prevalence of MRSA in hospitals has remained very low compared with hospitals in neighbouring countries, thanks to the Dutch 'search and destroy' strategy.

HOW DO YOU BECOME AN MRSA CARRIER?

MRSA exists in around 3% of the total population. It is particularly prevalent in hospitals and in all places where people are cared for or accommodated (nursing homes, care homes, etc.).

You become an MRSA carrier:

BY TRANSMISSION FROM ANOTHER CARRIER (HANDS) THROUGH CONTAMINATED OBJECTS AFTER TAKING ANTIBIOTICS.

WHO IS MOST AT RISK FROM MRSA?

People who are already ill or weak, people with urinary catheters or on a drip, and/or with wounds that are not healing well, and/or receiving antibiotics for another infection and/or staying in hospital for long periods.

HOW IS MRSA TREATED?

In general, MRSA colonisation (carriage) does not require any treatment. However, in the event of that you are hospitalised, your doctor, in collaboration with the Infection Prevention and Control Department, will decide whether it is necessary to „decolonise“ you. They explain how to carry out the treatment so that it is effective. „Decolonising“ means eliminating MRSA from the body, hair and nostrils.

WHY ARE MRSA-CARRIER PATIENTS SUBJECT TO SPECIFIC PRECAUTIONS IN HOSPITAL?

MRSA can cause infections, particularly in hospitals. It is mainly transmitted by contaminated hands or objects.

To prevent transmission:

- You will be given a single room (provided this is possible)
- Your movements outside the room will be restricted
- Your visits will be limited and must comply with certain guidelines
- A card indicating the precautions to be taken will be placed on the door to your room.
- Your care team will also take special precautions:
 - Hand disinfection with a hydroalcoholic solution will be reinforced
 - They must wear gowns, gloves and masks when entering your room.

IS MRSA DANGEROUS FOR MY LOVED ONES?

As an MRSA carrier, you pose no particular danger to healthy members of your family, including the elderly, pregnant women and babies.

You can therefore continue your social activities (leisure, sexual relations, etc.) and professional activities without taking any particular precautions, as long as you maintain daily personal hygiene.

IF YOU ARE BREAST-FEEDING, BEING AN MRSA CARRIER IS NOT DANGEROUS FOR YOU OR YOUR BABY.