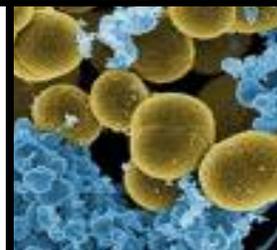


MRSA Prevention

What is MRSA? Staphylococcus aureus, or staph for short, is a very common species of bacteria. Many individuals are said to be "colonized" with staph and have it living in their nasal passages or on their skin. These individuals exhibit no symptoms and are not "infected". Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus is like other types of staph, but with one important difference : MRSA strains are immune to many common antibiotics.

What Causes a MRSA Infection?

- Anyone is susceptible when they have a skin opening
- The bacteria does not need a large opening
- Even an ingrown hair can be enough
- Direct physical contact with someone or something harboring the bacteria



What to Look For?

- Many mistaken for spider bites, ingrown hairs or pimples
- Common symptoms include: redness, swelling, heat, hardness
- Typically produce pus or other drainage
- Longer than normal healing time
- Any increase in size
- Unexplained or unusual pain or sensitivity
- Red streaks around the lesion

Prevention

- Athletes should shower immediately after all practices or games
- This washes away bacteria they may have picked up on their bodies
- Effective hand washing, forms a lather, lifting the dirt and germs
- In group settings use liquid hand soap not bar soap
- Discourage sharing of razors, towels, etc.
- Clean surfaces that athletes touch often including weight benches
- Do not keep sweaty gear in a gym bag, this creates a moist, dark, warm environment
- Store athletic equipment in an open and well-ventilated area
- Clean athlete's equipment regularly
- Thoroughly clean wounds, washing away debris and exudates
- Cover all wounds, even small ones, covered wounds heal faster



Athletes remember to get all skin wounds checked, no matter how minor by your coach, parent or trainer. If a wound looks suspicious or isn't healing normally, see a physician.

With the right antibiotics and prompt infection-site treatment, a MRSA infection can be cured fairly easily. Most serious health problems are caused by late or incorrect diagnosis.

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