

Facts about MRSA

MRSA is a type of staphylococcus aureus (staph) bacteria commonly found on the skin and in the nose of healthy people. Staph that are resistant to the antibiotic methicillin (and other related antibiotics) are known as **methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus** or MRSA. A different type of antibiotic is used to treat a MRSA infection. When staph are present on or in the body without causing illness it is called "colonization." At any given time, from 20% to 50% of the general population is colonized with staph bacteria and are not ill or infected; some may be MRSA, while others are not anti-biotic resistant.

Spread of MRSA

MRSA was primarily seen in the hospital setting among sick and elderly people. Since the late 1990's, studies have shown that MRSA colonization and infections are occurring in healthy children and adults who do not have hospital-associated risk factors. It appears that these people have acquired MRSA in the community. People are more likely to get an infection if they have:

- **Skin to skin contact** with the hands, wound drainage, or nasal secretions of a person who is infected or colonized with MRSA
- **Openings in their skin** such as cuts or abrasions
- **Poor hygiene**
- **Participate in a contact sports**

Diagnosis of MRSA

- **Wound culture is taken** by your private Health Care Provider

Signs and Symptoms of a skin infection

- **Site is red, swollen or painful**
- **Area is warm to touch**
- **Fever**
- **Purulent drainage** (pus)
- **May look like a spider bite, pimple or boil**

Strategies and Prevention of Infections

HAND WASHING IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT BEHAVIOR IN PREVENTING INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 15 seconds (or use an alcohol-based sanitizer):

- **After** sneezing, blowing or touching your nose
- **After** using the toilet
- **Before and after** a game or practice
- **Before and after** touching and/or caring for a break in the skin

Other Precautions

- **Shower** with soap and water as soon as possible after direct contact sports
- **Dry** using a clean dry towel
- **Do Not share** equipment, towels, soap or any personal care items
- **Do Not share** towels or drinking containers on the sidelines during a game or practice
- **Do Not share** ointments, creams, or antibiotics

- **Keep your hands** away from your nose, mouth and eyes
- **Keep all skin wounds completely covered** with a bandage
- **Wash** towels, equipment, practice uniforms and any other laundry in **hot water and detergent daily**
- **Report a skin rash, boil, abrasion, cut, spider bite or turf burn promptly to the Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC), coach, or school nurse and to your parent**

Care and Treatment

- **Consult** your Private Health Care Provider
- **Tell** your doctor that you are an athlete (a wound culture should be taken)
- **Take all antibiotics** as prescribed by your doctor, even if the infection seems to have healed
- **Inform** your doctor, Certified Athletic Trainer, and parent, if the wound is not improving
- **Keep wounds covered at all times until completely healed**
- **Bring** a doctor's note to the ATC indicating your diagnosis and treatment plan

All health information shared with school personnel is kept confidential under the law.

The above information was acquired from the Mt. Lebanon School District, the Centers for Disease Control, the Bucks County Health Department, the NCAA and the National Athletic Trainer's Association guidelines.

www.cdc.gov

www.nata.org

www.buckscounty.org

www.ncaa.org

Dear Parents and Students,

Recently, the media has given much attention to the community-acquired methicillin-resistant staphylococcus infection (CA-MRSA). Historically, MRSA was only seen in health care settings. However, MRSA rates have increased recently in persons outside of health care facilities, affecting athletes and the physically active. The transmission of the MRSA infection can occur through skin trauma from turf burns or rubberized flooring, skin to skin contact, as well as sharing of personal items and equipment.

Anyone who is physically active or associated with team sports should be knowledgeable of preventive measures and treatments. In an effort to educate the community about the potential risks of CA-MRSA, the Central Bucks School District has compiled the attached information pamphlet. Further information can be found via the following websites:

www.ncaa.org

www.nata.org

www.cdc.gov

www.buckscounty.org



**CENTRAL BUCKS
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

LEADING THE WAY

**Community-acquired
MRSA
(CA-MRSA)**

**Fact Sheet for
Students and Parents**