

## Community Acquired -MRSA

### Can I have visitors?

Yes. Healthy people are not at risk for developing infections with MRSA. Visitors must wear a gown, gloves and mask in the room. They must remove the gown and gloves and wash their hands when leaving the room. There will be a sign on the door to let your visitors know what is required. Visitors should talk with your nurse in order to be shown how to properly put on and remove the personal protective equipment.

### What happens when I go home?

You can go home with MRSA. Continue to wash your hands well. Good hand washing prevents infections. Your nurse will review any special instructions with you before you go home.

### What should I do if I need continuing health care?

When any further health care is needed, you should let the health care worker know that you have MRSA. You may still carry MRSA even though you feel well and it is causing you no harm.

You need to give this information:

- when you go to a doctor
- when you go to a hospital or clinic
- any time you need to give a medical history

### References:

This fact sheet provides basic general information only and is to be used as a quick guide, not as a complete resource on the subject. If you have any further questions, ask Infection Prevention & Control, your physician or health care worker.

Special thanks to St Joseph's Health Care in Hamilton for allowing HGMH to reference their fact sheet for CA-MRSA.

**For other Infection Control Resources visit:**

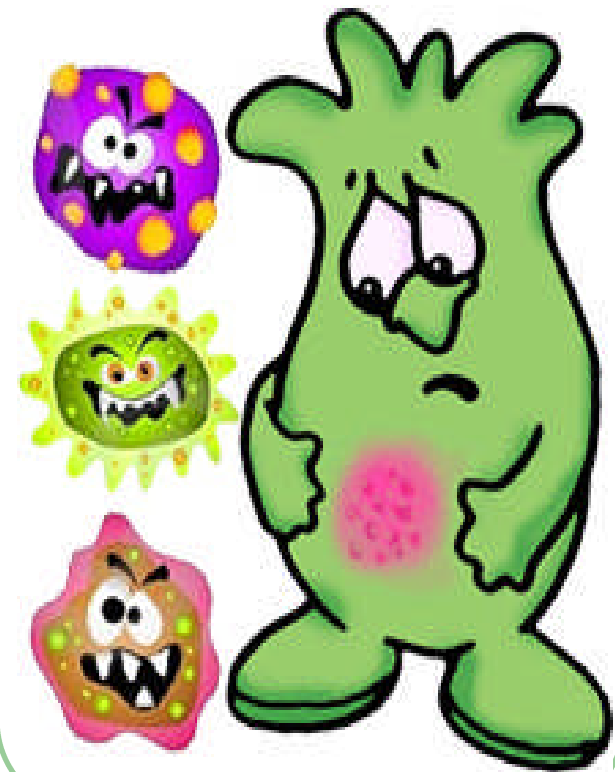
[www.hgmh.on.ca](http://www.hgmh.on.ca)

**—follow the infection control link**

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## Community Acquired Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus (CA-MRSA)



## What is CA-MRSA?

CA-MRSA stands for Community Acquired Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus. It is a new type of bacteria that has been found in the community. Bacteria can cause infections. CA-MRSA can be found on the skin, in the nose or in the rectal area. Sometimes, persons with CA-MRSA have no infections, but have the bacteria. This is called 'colonization' or 'carrier state'. MRSA is found in hospitals and health care facilities; whereas CA-MRSA is most often found in the community.

## Why be concerned about CA-MRSA?

We are concerned about CA-MRSA for many reasons. CA-MRSA can cause skin boils and abscesses-which often look like spider bites. Some of these boils and abscesses may get worse and develop into a severe skin and soft tissue infection. Less common, CA-MRSA can cause severe infections in the blood, nervous system, joints and bones, and lungs.

## How is it spread?

It can be spread by touching people who have it or by handing things that they have used. Some things you can do to limit community spread are to avoid contact with other persons broken skin, avoid sharing towels, razors, clothing or personal items, clean all cuts and abrasions immediately with soap and water, cover all skin breaches with a clean dry/dressing. Washing your hands well is the most important thing you can do to stop the spread of CA-MRSA.

## Who is at risk for CA-MRSA infection?

CA-MRSA infections tend to occur in young healthy people. It also occurs in people with chronic skin disease and those who are CA-MRSA carriers. CA-MRSA has been found in:

- healthy newborns
- homeless people
- people with frequent antibiotic use
- aboriginal populations
- athletes involved in contact sports
- correctional facility residents
- daycare attendees
- men who have sex with men
- IV drug users
- when you go to a doctor
- when you go to a hospital or clinic
- any time you need to give a medical history

## What happens if I have CA-MRSA and I am in the hospital or long-term care?

If you have MRSA, you will have a room of your own (if available) or share a room with another patient who also has MRSA. This helps to protect you and prevent the spread of MRSA. While in hospital you will be in Contact Precautions.

## What are Contact Precautions?

Contact Precautions are things that are done by staff and visitors to reduce risks to others.

These include:

- A sign is put on your door about Contact Precautions.
- Majority of your supplies are stored outside your room.
- You may need to stay in your room.
- People entering your room must wear a gown and gloves and mask.
- Before leaving your room, everyone must take off their gown, gloves and mask and wash their hands.
- If you need to leave your room for a test or ray, a staff member will help you get ready. You will need to wear gown and complete hand hygiene .
- Wash hands well and often. Use soap and water or the waterless hand rinse that is the most important thing you can do to stop the spread of CA-MRSA.

