

The Facts about MRSA A Quick Overview

- MRSA is a drug-resistant strain of a bacteria, *Staphylococcus aureus*, that is normally found throughout the environment and is sometimes carried by individuals without causing illness
- Although anyone can get a staph infection people are more likely to get staph infections from:
 - Skin-to-skin contact with someone who has a staph infection or is a carrier
 - Contact with items and surfaces that have staph on them
 - Sharing personal items
 - Openings in their skin such as cuts or scrapes
 - Crowded living conditions
 - Poor hygiene
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has estimated that the number of people who developed a serious MRSA infection in 2005 was about 94,000, with approximately 19,000 deaths during a hospital stay related to these serious MRSA infections.
- Serious MRSA disease is still predominantly related to healthcare delivery
 - About 85% of invasive MRSA infections were associated with healthcare
 - About 14% of all the infections occurred in persons without obvious exposures to healthcare
- MRSA infections seen most frequently in the hospital include surgical wound, urinary tract, and bloodstream infections as well as pneumonia.
- In the general population MRSA infections not associated with healthcare, called community acquired infections, generally occur as skin infections that may look like pimples, boils or spider bites.
- **The good news is that we can prevent MRSA from spreading!**
- In the hospital the first step to prevent MRSA is to prevent healthcare infections in general by following infection control guidelines produced by CDC and the Healthcare Infection Control and Prevention Advisory Committee (HICPAC) and incorporated into hospital infection control policies
- Other key strategies to prevent MRSA from spreading include:
 - Wash your hands often or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
 - Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered with a bandage
 - Do not touch other people's cuts or bandages
 - Do not share personal items like towels or razors
 - Practice good personal hygiene
 - Keep athletic wear **and** equipment clean or freshly laundered
- At WRAMC a hospital grade disinfectant is used to clean equipment and the environment. In the home a commercial household cleaner is effective. A bleach solution can also be used. Be sure to follow the label directions to use the product safely and effectively.
- For more information on MRSA check the following links:
 - [CDC](#)
 - [Force Health Protection and Readiness](#)
 - [US Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine](#)