

WEST DELAWARE HEALTH SERVICES

MRSA INFORMATION

We want to educate parents and students on certain precautions necessary to prevent the spread of MRSA.

What is a staph infection?

Staphylococcus aureus (known as “staph”) is a common bacteria that is carried on the skin or in the nose of healthy people. Approximately 30% of people carry the staph bacteria, and most never develop any symptoms or illness. Staph is a leading cause of skin and soft tissue infection.

Staph skin infections can be just at the surface of the skin or can go into the soft tissue to form a boil or abscess. Invasive staph infections are different from skin and soft tissue infections. Invasive staph infections are more serious, but they occur much less often than skin or soft tissue infections.

What is MRSA?

Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (CA-MRSA) is a type of Staphylococcus aureus, which is RESISTANT to some antibiotics that typically have been used to treat skin and soft tissue infections.

How are staph infections spread?

Staph infections are spread by direct physical contact with the bacteria. It is almost always spread person to person, but can be spread through contact with contaminated surfaces, personal items, such as towels or sports equipment. Spread of staph infections has occurred usually through skin to skin contact when playing sports, such as wrestling, or from surfaces in gyms and locker rooms. The staph infection usually enters when a person has a tiny break in the skin from a cut, scrape or scratches that allow the bacteria to enter into the body and then can result in an infection.

How do you prevent MRSA infection?

- 1.) Good hygiene is the best prevention! Wash your hands frequently/regularly. Use soap and water or an alcohol based sanitizer. You need to wash your hands long enough to recite the alphabet.**
- 2.) Cover cuts and scrapes with a bandage as it will prevent you from spreading bacteria to other people. Do not touch other people’s bandages or wounds.**
- 3.) Do not share personal items like towels, razors, clothing, and soap.**
- 4.) Everyone should shower after every athletic activity using your own soap and clean towels. Take your dirty clothes home and launder them after each use.**

What to watch for if you think you have a skin infection?

MRSA may cause a skin infection that looks like a pimple or boil. The sore often looks like a spider bite. It can be red, swollen, painful and may drain pus. Seek medical attention for correct diagnosis. If you are prescribed antibiotics, make sure you complete the full number of doses as prescribed. Antibiotics should not be shared or saved for future use.