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[Health Protection](#)



Meticillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* MRSA

Staphylococcus aureus (often shortened to "Staph", "Staph aureus" or *S. aureus*) is a type of bacteria (germ) which lives harmlessly on the skin and in the noses, in about one third of people.

Most strains of *S. aureus* are sensitive to the more commonly used antibiotics, and infections can be effectively treated. Some *S. aureus* bacteria are more resistant. Those resistant to the antibiotic meticillin are termed meticillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and often require different types of antibiotic to treat them.

Symptoms of MRSA

Having MRSA on your skin doesn't cause any symptoms and doesn't make you ill. You won't usually know if you have it unless you have a screening test before going into hospital.

If MRSA gets deeper into your skin, it can cause:

- redness
- swelling
- warmth
- pain
- pus

If it gets further into your body, it can cause more serious infections, like blood poisoning and toxic shock syndrome where it gets into the bloodstream. These are much less common than skin infections.

What is MRSA bacteraemia?

The word bacteraemia means the presence of bacteria in the bloodstream. A bloodstream infection can sometimes be referred to as septicaemia or blood poisoning. The cause of a bloodstream infection can be tested for by the microbiology lab using blood cultures.

When MRSA is found in the blood cultures, then a person is diagnosed with an MRSA bacteraemia.

How you get MRSA

These factsheets give information on *Staphylococcus aureus* (often shortened to "Staph", "Staph aureus" or *S. aureus*), a type of bacteria (germ) which lives harmlessly on the skin and in the noses, in about one third of people.

The factsheets give information on meticillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and meticillin-sensitive *Staphylococcus aureus* (MSSA).

Details

Format

A4 Pdf

Target group

Health Professionals and general public

Downloads

Attachment	Size
MRSA Information factsheet.pdf	218.02 KB
MSSA information factsheet.pdf	215.72 KB
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