



University of Connecticut
Health Center
John Dempsey Hospital
NICU/Newborn Nursery

Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) (meth-uh-SILL-un) (staf-ih-loh-KOK-us)(OR-e-us)

Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus is a bacteria (bak-TEER-e-uh) or a type of germ that can cause infection. It is also called MRSA.

MRSA is one type of bacteria that has changed over the years so that it cannot be killed by many different antibiotics (an-ti-bi-AH-tiks). For this reason, it is called "resistant".

- MRSA can infect any part of the body. It can be hard to treat and it spreads easily
- MRSA used to be an infection that you only got in a hospital. Now more people are getting MRSA outside of the hospital.

MRSA often lives inside the nose and on the skin of people who are healthy; this means that they are colonized. For most people, MRSA is not likely to cause an infection.

MRSA can cause infections, especially in premature and sick infants who are in neonatal intensive care units (NICUs).

- MRSA is spread only by touch and physical contact, not by breathing air.
- MRSA may live on objects such as counter tops and incubators. If someone touches these objects and touches a baby, they may spread MRSA.
- This is one reason why it is so important to wash for 3 minutes before entering the nurseries and to clean your hands before touching your baby.

We test for MRSA by using a cotton swab to wipe inside your baby's nose or other parts of the skin. This is called a "culture". The swab is tested in the lab for MRSA.

Treatment for MRSA:

- An ointment called Bactroban® will be placed in the nose to try to get rid of the MRSA.
- Special precautions called "contact precautions" are used. Caregivers entering your baby's bed space will wear gloves and sometimes gowns. This is to keep MRSA from spreading any further.
- Your baby will be put into a private room or area of the nursery; we group babies with MRSA together.
- If you have more than one baby in the nurseries, you will be asked to wear a gown when holding the baby who has MRSA.
- All parents, family members and other visitors should wash their hands after leaving the bedside and before leaving the hospital.

Please speak with your baby's caregivers if you have any more questions about MRSA and what it means for your baby.

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