

### You can get further advice and information by:

- Asking your Doctor or Healthcare Professional

### Other sources of information about health and health care:

- **Public Health England** works with national and local government, industry and the NHS to protect and improve the nation's health and support healthier choices.  
Website: [www.gov.uk/phe](http://www.gov.uk/phe)
- **NHS Choices** is the online 'front door' to the NHS. It is the country's biggest health website and gives all the information you need to make choices about your health.  
Website: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

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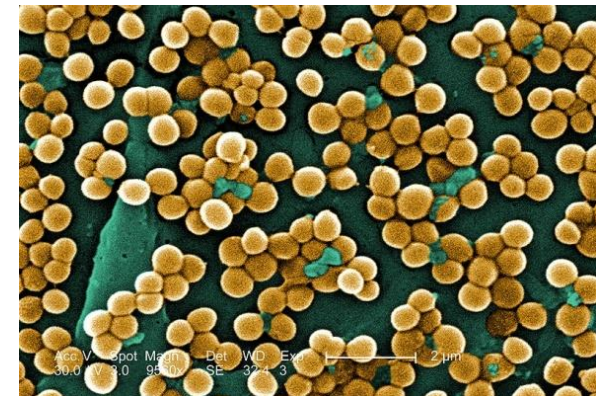


Shropshire Community Health

NHS Trust

## Infection Prevention and Control

### MRSA Screening



Magnified view of MRSA bacterium (germ)

### Information Leaflet



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This leaflet should be read in conjunction with the Meticillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) information leaflet.

### Why do we screen for MRSA?

There are many people in the community who are colonised with MRSA. This means that they carry the MRSA bacterium (germ) without showing any signs and symptoms.

Screening (performing a simple swab test) on admission and/or as part of the pre-surgery process or monthly screening for in-patients, allows us to identify if you are colonised with MRSA and provide a decolonisation treatment for you.

This helps to prevent the spread of the germ and lowers the risk of complications following invasive procedures.

### What tests are done to look for MRSA?

Following your consent, a swab will be taken from your nose and any wound lesions on your body. This involves a cotton bud type swab being placed in and around your nose or on the surface of any wound. A urine specimen may also be taken. The test will not hurt but may be a little uncomfortable. The swabs are then sent to the laboratory for testing.

### What happens next?

The results usually take 3-4 working days. If your swabs are found to be MRSA negative (this means that MRSA was not detected) then you will not receive a communication to confirm this.

If your swab(s) are found to be MRSA positive, it usually means you are carrying MRSA and not infected with MRSA. However, you will be prescribed a cream or ointment to be applied to your nose. You may also be prescribed oral antibiotics.

If you are an in-patient you may also be transferred to a single room. This is to prevent MRSA spreading to other patients. If you have been screened as part of the pre-surgery you will be asked to go to your GP practice to obtain a prescription for an ointment/cream.

### The Treatment

The ointment should be applied to the inside of each nostril, using the tip of your little finger or on a disposable cotton bud. The nostrils should then

be gently squeezed together; this will spread the ointment through the nostrils. If you can sniff do so until you can taste the ointment at the back of the throat.

Hands must be washed before and after application.

You may also be prescribed oral antibiotics; this treatment will help clear the MRSA from your body.

### How will this affect me and my family?

MRSA is usually passed on by human contact, particularly people's hands. When hands have been in contact with MRSA and are not washed thoroughly the MRSA can 'hitch a ride' to the next person. The easiest way to prevent spreading the germ is to follow good personal hygiene rules, in particular a good hand washing technique.

### What is the risk of proceeding with surgery if I am MRSA positive?

The risk of MRSA infection is minimal, providing you follow the advice given and treat yourself using the instructions given in this leaflet.

**Remember:** Good hand hygiene is the easiest way to prevent the spread of MRSA and other germs.