

# METHICILLIN-RESISTANT STAPHYLOCOCCUS AUREUS (MRSA) FACT SHEET

## What is MRSA?

MRSA is a staph bacteria that is resistant to many antibiotics making it very dangerous. Most infections occur in the hospital or other health care settings. If left untreated, MRSA will cause sepsis, a life threatening reaction to infection in the body.

## What are the symptoms?

- Begins with a skin infection that is often mistaken for a spider bite but continues to swell. The bump may be red or discolored, swollen, painful, warm, and oozing pus or other fluid.
- Fever
- Symptoms appear usually 2 to 5 days after exposure

## How can it be prevented?

- Maintain proper hand and body hygiene being sure to wash thoroughly and often
- Keep cuts, scrapes and wounds clean and covered until healed
- Avoid sharing items such as towels and razors
- Seek treatment early if you think you might have an infection

More information: <http://www.cdc.gov/mrsa>

## How can it be spread?

- Sharing personal items such as towels and razors that have touched infected skin
- Contact with drainage from the abscess
- Contact with contaminated surfaces.
- There is an increased chance of exposure in places where overcrowding, skin to skin contact and/or physical activity is high
- Athletes and those who have just received medical treatment are at highest risk

## How is it treated?

- Though resistant to common antibiotics, there are some antibiotics that are strong enough to treat MRSA infections
- Surgical attention may be required to drain the abscess
- See your doctor IMMEDIATELY if MRSA is suspected

