

Notes from the Nurse-MRSA Facts

What is staph aureus?

Staph is a type of bacteria that may cause skin infections. These infections may be red, swollen, painful, or have pus or other drainage.

What is MRSA (Methicillin Resistant Staph Aureus)?

MRSA is a type of staph infection that is resistant to many antibiotics. MRSA infections look like a spider bite, a boil, abscess or turf burn

What are the settings where MRSA occurs?

MRSA skin infections can occur anywhere, but are more common in settings with the following factors (the 5 C's):

- **C**rowding
- Frequent skin-to-skin **C**ontact
- **C**ompromised skin (cuts or abrasions)
- **C**ontaminated items and surfaces
- Lack of **C**leanliness

How is MRSA transmitted?

MRSA is usually transmitted by direct skin-to-skin contact, or contact with shared items or surfaces that have come into contact with someone else's infection (eg. - sports equipment, personal hygiene items)

Prevention: How do I protect myself from MRSA?

- Wash your hands often (soap and water or hand sanitizer)
- Do not share personal hygiene items (bar soap, towels, razors) or clothing
- Avoid contact with other people's skin infections
- Cover all wounds with a clean, dry bandage
- Report skin infections to the school nurse
- Wipe down shared surfaces regularly (desks, keyboards, phones, light switches)
- Participants in sports:
 - Shower immediately after each practice or game
 - Wear practice uniforms only once then wash

What is Saint Joseph High School doing to address this issue?

- Maintenance manager has implemented cleaning of athletic equipment, weight training rooms, and locker rooms on a scheduled basis.
- MRSA signage has been placed in all athletic areas.
- Signs promoting hand washing have been placed throughout the building
- MRSA facts will be presented to students/athletes by physical education teachers, athletic trainer and Athletic Director (to pass information on to coaches).
- OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) standards are maintained in classrooms, lunchroom and restrooms.
- Discide wipes effective in eliminating MRSA have been purchased for all departments; use of these is encouraged for wiping down common surfaces and equipment.
- All faculty, staff, and coaches view a blood borne pathogens video.

What can parents do?

- Educate yourself (*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* - <http://cdc.gov/>)
- Reinforce prevention tips with your teenager
- Observe for any open areas; if painful, reddened or not healing, contact your physician

Questions? Contact SJHS School Nurse:

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