

## PREVENTION OF MRSA

### **In Hospital**

In the healthcare settings, people colonized or infected with MRSA are usually placed on precautions to help prevent spread of MRSA within the healthcare facility. Healthcare workers wear protective garments and must follow the infection prevention and control procedures of the facility. Friends and family may be asked to follow special precautions as well.

### **At Home and in the Community:**

YOU can prevent MRSA infections in five EASY steps!

- 1. Clean your hands.** [Clean](#) your hands frequently with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub. Do not use disinfectants to clean your hands. For those with an infection, you, your family, and others in close contact should clean your hands frequently - especially before and after changing the bandage or touching the infected area.
- 2. Do not share personal items.** Avoid sharing personal items. If you have an MRSA infection, do not share personal items that may have had contact with the infected wound or bandage. Wash sheets, towels, and clothes that come into contact with the infection using water and laundry detergent. Usual laundry and dryer settings are effective in killing MRSA. For more information click [here](#).
  - Personal items include:
    - Razors
    - Towels
    - Clothing or uniforms
    - Toothbrushes
    - Nail files
    - Combs and brushes
    - Creams or lotions
    - Soaps and make-up
    - Athletic equipment that touches the skin
- 3. Shower or bathe regularly.** On a daily basis, wash your body with soap and water. For athletes, shower immediately after each game or practice.
- 4. Maintain a clean environment.** Create a daily cleaning schedule for surfaces that come in contact with your skin. For those with an MRSA infection, clean all surfaces that come into direct contact with infected area. Please see our Environmental Cleaning section for more information.
- 5. Cover your wound.** [Keep wounds](#) that are draining, or have pus, covered with clean, dry bandages until they have healed (scabbed over). Follow your doctor's instructions on proper care of the wound.
  - a. Keeping the infection covered will help prevent spreading it to others
  - b. Bandages and tape can be discarded with regular waste ... and don't forget to clean your hands!

### **Differences between soap and hand sanitizers**

**Soaps** (aka cleaner or detergent) works by removing soil, dirt, dust, organic matter and germs off surfaces so they can be rinsed away with water.

- Use a bar of soap or plain liquid soap for everyday washing
- [Do NOT use antibacterial or antibiotic soaps](#) – these chemical are not effective, are not needed and are harmful to the environment. They can increase bacterial resistance to antibiotics.

**Alcohol-based hand sanitizers** are used to reduce germs to levels considered safe from the surface of the hands.

- Sanitizers will not remove dirt, soil, or dust
- Hands that are visibly soiled need to be washed with soap and water to mechanically remove the dirt, soil etc.

For more information on using soaps and alcohol-based sanitizers, please click [here](#).