

MRSA

Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus

What is MRSA? MRSA is a type of “staph” or bacterial infection that is resistant to many antibiotics and frequently causes skin infections.

What do MRSA infections look like? Often a MRSA infection will look like a spider bite, a boil, abscess or turf burn. The area may be red, swollen, painful, warm to touch, maybe full of pus or other drainage.

How is MRSA spread? MRSA skin infections are generally spread by skin-to skin contact or by direct contact with the infected wound drainage. MRSA may also be spread by contact with contaminated surfaces or things such as sports equipment or personal hygiene items. MRSA infections are not spread through the air.

How to prevent and control the spread of MRSA?

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if water is not available.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as bar soap, towels, washcloths, razors, clothing or athletic equipment.
- Report any rashes, open sores, pimples or boils to the school nurse or to your health care provider immediately
- All scrapes and cuts should be covered with a bandage until they are healed.
- If you participate in sports, shower immediately after each practice, game or match.
- Wear practice uniforms once, wash uniform with soap and hot water, dry in hot dryer.
- Contact your school nurse if your child has been diagnosed with MRSA. Students with MRSA should not participate in contact sports until given permission by a doctor.

The Ephrata Area School District has well-established procedures to deal with infectious diseases like MRSA. District staff is in-serviced at the beginning of each

school year on the prevention of blood borne pathogens while other staff such as school nurses receive specialized training appropriate for their position.

MRSA can be a particular concern among athletes who are involved in contact sports. The District's Athletic Department promotes safe athletic practices including educating student athletes on blood borne pathogens and not sharing athletic department.