

If you are worried about MRSA you can talk to your dialysis nurse or doctor or visit the NHS choices website at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) where you can find further information about MRSA.

Please remember that hand washing with soap and water is a key method to prevent the spread of any infection. There is a hand wash sink at the entrance of all dialysis units please use it before entering the ward and before you leave.

## Reducing infections

To reduce the risk of infection a range of procedures have been implemented across the Trust:

- There is a dedicated team responsible for helping staff maintain a high standard of care in infection prevention and control
- The Trust has a comprehensive infection prevention and control policy which is evidence based and regularly reviewed
- All staff are required to attend a yearly education and training update
- A range of information leaflets have been produced for patients, carers and the public
- Infection rates are monitored across the Trust. Any risks or trends identified are reported monthly to the Infection Prevention and Control Group, the Board of Directors and Public Health England

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact a member of the Infection Prevention and Control team on 0121 371 3785 or ask a member of the nursing or medical staff.



The Trust provides free monthly health talks on a variety of medical conditions and treatments. For more information visit [www.uhb.nhs.uk/health-talks.htm](http://www.uhb.nhs.uk/health-talks.htm) or call 0121 371 4323.

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# MRSA Screening and Decolonisation Treatment for Haemodialysis Patients

Delivering the best in care

**UHB is a no smoking Trust**

To see all of our current patient information leaflets please visit [www.uhb.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets.htm](http://www.uhb.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets.htm)

## Information for patients

### Who is this leaflet for?

This leaflet is for haemodialysis patients under the care of University Hospitals Birmingham wherever they undergo dialysis treatment.

### What this leaflet tells you

This leaflet tells you what MRSA is, how we screen for it, what a positive screen means for you and how we will treat you if you receive a positive screen result.

### What is MRSA?

MRSA stands for **M**eticillin-**R**esistant **S**taphylococcus **A**ureus. It is a form of a common bug called *Staphylococcus aureus*. This bug lives harmlessly in the nose and in one third of people, on the skin. The bug is more common on skin that is broken, such as with a cut, a sore or a skin disorder such as eczema. Those who have MRSA on their bodies or in their noses, but who are unharmed by it are described as being 'colonised' or 'carriers'. Most people who have MRSA carry it without any symptoms. This is termed colonisation or carriage.

### What problems can MRSA colonisation (carriage) cause me?

As a haemodialysis patient your immune system is not able to deal with infections as well as it should be able to. Haemodialysis requires frequent access through the skin to your bloodstream. This means that if you carry MRSA on your skin, even though we take precautions to ensure your skin is thoroughly cleaned before dialysis, you are at a higher risk of infection than if you were not on dialysis. It is a particular risk if you have a haemodialysis line rather than a fistula as the line provides a constant connection between your skin and your blood stream.

### How will I be screened for MRSA?

We recommend that all haemodialysis patients undergo screening every three months. This will be performed at your dialysis centre. Swabs will be taken from your nose, groin, throat, any areas of broken skin and from around your line if you have one. This is a painless procedure.

### How long do the results take?

It usually takes between 3-5 working days for swab results to be available. This is because the MRSA has to 'grow' in the lab.

### What if I have MRSA?

If you are found to be carrying MRSA do not worry! You are unlikely to suffer any harm or to infect anyone else. If you are worried about MRSA please talk to your dialysis nurse or dialysis doctor. If you are colonised with MRSA you may be moved to a single side room to have your dialysis to reduce the risk of transmission.

### Treatment for MRSA

If you are colonised with MRSA, you will be treated with an antiseptic body wash and antibiotic cream for your nose. This is explained in the leaflet 'Use of *Staphylococcus aureus* decolonisation treatment in dialysis patients'. After one week of treatment, swabs will be taken from you again. If these remain positive your doctor will recommend a further week of treatment. We will then repeat the screen weekly for three weeks to ensure the bacteria has cleared.

If at home we also suggest that you change and launder all your clothes, towels, sheets and pillowcases at the beginning of your MRSA treatment.

### Side effects of MRSA decontamination treatment

The decontamination treatment has few side effects and these are mild. If you develop a rash, stop the treatment and ask your clinic nurse or doctor for advice.