



Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus

INFORMATION BROCHURE

What about when I go home from hospital?

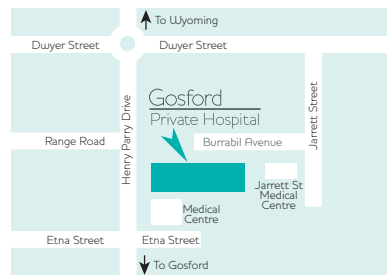
If you are having visits from a home nurse or other health care workers, they may need to take some extra precautions to protect other patients in their care.

Good hand hygiene practices (especially after going to the toilet) will be important when you are discharged. Otherwise no extra precautions need to be taken.

Next time you go to hospital, it is important to tell your nurse or doctor that you have previously had MRSA.

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Helping to prevent the spread of infection

Gosford
Private Hospital

a member of the [healthcare group](http://healthcaregroup.com.au)



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What is Staphylococcus Aureus?

Staphylococcus Aureus is a common bacteria (germ) that about 20-30% of the population have on their skin and in their nose. It is a bacteria (germ) that can cause a minor infection such as boils, carbuncles and impetigo.

Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) is when the bacteria (germ) has become resistant to a number of antibiotics including Methicillin.

What is the difference between being infected and being colonised with bacteria?

Being **colonised** means that the bacteria, is present and multiplying, but it does not cause disease or infection. All of us are colonised by a certain amount of bacteria on our skin and in our body.

Being **infected** means that the bacteria is present and multiplying, but is causing a disease or infection. For example: when you get a boil, the bacteria that has been present on your skin, has enabled an infection to occur.

How do you get MRSA?

MRSA can be spread on to others on the hands of health care workers, visitors and patients or via contaminated equipment such as bed rails, bathroom fixtures or medical equipment.

Why do we manage MRSA differently to other bacteria?

This bacteria has become resistant to a number of different antibiotics, so if a patient is infected with MRSA we have a limited selection of antibiotics to use. Therefore it is important to be vigilant and reduce the opportunity for it to spread from patient to patient.

How do we stop the spread of MRSA?

Hand Hygiene is the most important step in preventing the spread of a MRSA infection. To clean hands, an alcohol hand rub or soap and water can be used. It is important for staff, patients and visitors to clean their hands every time they enter or leave a patient room or area.

Please feel free to remind your doctor, nurse or other health care workers about hand hygiene.

Cleaning medical equipment between patient use and keeping the hospital clean is very important.

Single rooms and Contact Precautions provide an extra physical barrier between patients, which is why you have been given your own room. Staff will be wearing gloves and long sleeved gowns when providing personal care to you. Your visitors may also be instructed to wear gloves and long sleeved gowns whilst visiting you.

Are my family and friends at risk?

No. People in good health are not at risk of developing MRSA. Normal contact including kissing is fine.

However, family and friends may be at an increased risk if they are immunocompromised, e.g. on chemotherapy or if they have dermatitis or eczema. (If you are unsure, please discuss with the nurse in charge or contact the Infection Control Coordinator.)

There is no need for separate eating or drinking utensils and partners can share beds without any increased risk.

Linen and clothing can be taken home, (in a plastic bag), washed and dried as normal.

