

MRSA Screening

This leaflet is for patients who are admitted to the hospital within Berkshire Healthcare and their relatives and visitors. This may include those who have a planned, prebooked admission or who have been identified as having an increased risk of acquired MRSA.

What is MRSA?

Methicillin (M) resistant (R) Staphylococcus (S) aureus (A) is known as MRSA. MRSA is a type of germ called Staphylococcus aureus that has become resistant to Methicillin (a type of antibiotic) and some other antibiotics that are used to treat infections.

Staphylococcus aureus is common type of germ that can live harmlessly on the skin. It can sometimes cause infections, such as boils, wound infections and chest infections.

Many people carry Staphylococcus aureus in their nose or on their skin, doing them no harm. Staphylococcus aureus is not normally a risk to healthy people.

The majority of people who have MRSA do not have symptoms and aren't aware they are carrying it

The healthcare staff must be aware of people who have MRSA to ensure that appropriate treatment is given because people are more likely to get infection when they are already unwell or undergoing an operation. These infections can then be treated with the correct antibiotics.

More information can be obtained from the leaflet, MRSA – *Information for Patients*.

Please ask member of staff to provide you with one.

Visit berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk

Why am I being screened for MRSA?

Depending on certain individual risk factors for developing infections, screening for MRSA may be undertaken on admission to our hospitals. The risk factors can include wounds, urinary catheters, preexisting medical conditions or weakened immune system.

If MRSA is identified, we can ensure to provide appropriate treatment to reduce the risk of you developing infection and to reduce the risk of transmission of infection.

How will be screened?

We can find out if you are carrying MRSA by taking a swab from inside your nose, armpit, throat or groin and open wounds or sites. This involves a moist cotton bud swab being rubbed over the area. The results are usually available within three to four days. Sometimes, we may not be able to test all sites on your body immediately on admission and this may be done later during your stay.

What if I have MRSA?

You may be nursed in a single room. This is to minimise the risk of MRSA spreading to other patients. This will not affect the care you are given. You will be reviewed for suitability of having a special skin wash which reduces the amount of MRSA on your skin; this will be discussed with you by the team looking after you.

The fact that you have MRSA will be recorded in your medical notes and electronic patient record.

What How do I find out more?

More information is available from your doctor or nurse. Other people that can answer your questions include the members of the Infection Prevention and Control Team.

Further Information

You can visit the NHS website for general information about infection prevention and control

[nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)

Alternatively, you can contact our **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**, who can listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and direct you to further information.

Call 0118 960 5027

Visit [berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/pals](https://www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/pals)

Email bhft@berkshire.nhs.uk

 01189 605 140 (Mon to Fri, 9am – 5pm)



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