

Community Associated Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (CA-MRSA)

Last Reviewed May 2005

Definition	Role of the School Nurse
Additional Information	Resources

Definition:

MRSA is a type of *Staphylococcus aureus* (*S. aureus*) resistant to commonly prescribed antibiotics that are frequently used to treat staph infections. *S. aureus*, including MRSA, usually cause mild infections of the skin. MRSA, however can be more difficult to treat and can lead to life-threatening blood, bone or pulmonary infections. Both the *S. aureus* and MRSA are found on the skin or in the nose of healthy people. This is referred to as colonization.

MRSA has long been associated with hospital care (HA-MRSA). More recently a strain of MRSA, called community associated MRSA (CA-MRSA), has been associated with individuals outside of hospitals or healthcare facilities. CA-MRSA is often associated with recent antibiotic use, sharing contaminated items, recurrent skin diseases, and living in a crowded environment. It may also be spread through indirect contact by touching objects (e.g. towels, sports equipment, workout areas that have been contaminated by an infected individual). For more information on CA-MRSA please go to www.cdc.gov.

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL NURSE:

Educate coaches, staff and students (especially athletes) about the importance of:

- Frequent hand washing/use of waterless hand sanitizers,
- Being aware of skin lesions/infections among students/staff.
- Reporting/referring persons with skin lesions/infections to the school nurse as soon as possible.
- Keeping skin infections and wounds covered with clean, dry bandages.
- Establishing that persons diagnosed with MRSA infection/lesions may attend school and participate in PE only if lesions are kept consistently covered with a dry dressing.
- Not sharing personal items (towels, razors, clothing, etc.).
- Cleaning or laundering shared equipment or clothing between use.
- Showering thoroughly with soap and water after practices and competitions.
- Fully completing antibiotic treatment as prescribed for an infected person.

Educate custodial staff and coaches about the importance of:

- Routinely cleaning athletic equipment, including contact surfaces of shared equipment, mats, blocking pads and weights.
- Cleaning practice surfaces, such as mats, with an appropriate germicide prior to, and following, each practice session as recommended.

- Consulting with the school maintenance supervisor to assure use of a broad spectrum bactericide.
- Using effective proprietary cleansing solutions or dilute bleach (1 part bleach in 9 parts water).
- Confirming with equipment manufacturers the cleansers' compatibility with the surface to be cleaned.

Report to the Maine Bureau of Health (1-800-821-5821).

Additional Information:

- Minor abrasions and superficial wounds should be cared for with soap-and-water cleansing, perhaps using topical antibacterial ointment and bandaging as necessary, to prevent secondary infection.
- Any athlete participating in a contact sport with open, weeping, pustular, or vesicular lesions on the skin must be kept from practice and competition until an accurate diagnosis has been made, appropriate treatment has been employed for sufficient time, and adequate resolution of the lesions is apparent.

Resources:

BOH Common Questions and Answers -

http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/ddc/December_2004.htm

CDC Fact Sheet - <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/hip/Aresist/mrsafaq.htm>

CDC MRSA - <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/hip/Aresist/mrsa.htm>

<http://www.link.med.ed.ac.uk/RIDU/Mrsa.htm>

NY State Fact Sheet -

http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/communicable_diseases/en/mrsa.htm

National Collegiate Athletic Association -

http://www1.ncaa.org/membership/ed_outreach/health-safety/sports_med_education/infectious_prevention

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