

## Can I be moved to other healthcare facilities?

- Moving to other healthcare facilities can still occur if you are colonised or infected with an MRSA, we just need to notify them first.
- Moving to a rehabilitation centre or long-term care facility can also occur.

## What happens when I go home?

- When you go home, please be reassured that if good hygiene precautions are followed, people with a MRSA are not a hazard to others including their families or visitors. No restrictions to normal activities are necessary.
- Laundry and dishes can be cleaned as normal. Contaminated pads or dressings can be discarded by being placed in a bag and into the household rubbish.
- If you require ongoing medical or nursing care while at home, the staff will wear gloves and will continue strict hand hygiene.
- If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to ask the staff caring for you.

## Who can I contact?

**Your medical team or the Infection Prevention and Control Unit**  
Level 3, Building C Frankston Hospital

Phone: (03) 9784 7722  
Fax: (03) 9784 7576

### Office Hours:

Monday to Friday 8.00am - 4.30pm  
(Excluding Public Holidays & Weekends)

**Disclaimer:** The information contained in this brochure is intended to support not replace discussion with your doctor or health care professionals.

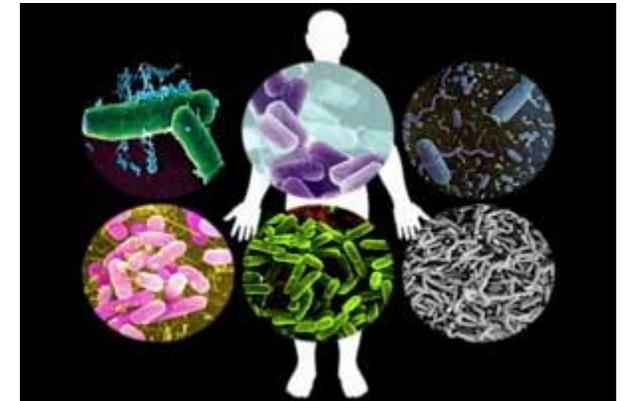
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## Information for patients who have

# Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)



## What is MRSA?

- **MRSA:** is a term used to describe certain types of bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics.
- **Staphylococcus aureus:** is a type of bacteria carried in the nose of 20-40% of normal healthy people and is most commonly found on skin.
- **MRSA (also referred to as Multi-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus):** is a bacteria that has become resistant to a number of antibiotics, which makes infections more difficult to treat.
- **Colonisation:** is having MRSA in your body but you have no signs or symptoms of infection.
- **Infection:** is when you have MRSA in your body and you have signs and symptoms of infection like fever, redness, swelling or discharge from a wound.

## How do I know if I have MRSA?

- In most instances, the first sign is an infection somewhere in your body. A sample from the affected area (eg. blood test, wound swab, fluid specimen) will be taken sent to a laboratory for testing to determine if the infection is caused by MRSA.
- The initial MRSA infection may subside with treatment, but it is possible for the MRSA to then remain in your body with no symptoms (colonisation).

## Is there treatment available?

- Yes. There are still some treatments available if an infection occurs.
- Colonisation with MRSA is generally not treated with antibiotics as the bacteria is not causing you harm. However, if you are having surgery, antibiotics may be used to help prevent infection occurring.
- People do not have to stay in hospital until the bacteria has gone. They may go home when their general condition allows, regardless of whether or not they still have the bacteria.

## How are they spread?

There are two main ways bacteria like MRSA is spread:

1. By directly contacting a patient who is infected or colonised or touching the same surfaces.
2. Carried to you on the hands of health care workers, after they have been in contact with an affected patient or contaminated surface or equipment.



## I have MRSA: can I spread it to others?

- Yes. MRSA can be spread to others but there are things we can do to stop this.
- More precautions will be used while you are in hospital. People in hospital are more likely to get an infection because of illness, surgery or medication.
- You may be transferred to a single room and hospital staff will wear gown and gloves whilst performing tasks in your room. This is to reduce the risk of the hospital staff transferring MRSA from you to other patients.

## What do my visitors need to do?

- Your visitors do not need to wear gloves and gowns unless they are involved with your direct personal care.
- Visitors will be asked to wash their hands or use hand rub when entering and leaving your room. They will also be advised not to visit any other patients during the same visit. Please tell your visitors not to sit or lie on your bed.
- Visitors are also asked not to visit you in hospital if they are unwell themselves (eg. cough or cold, diarrhoea, vomiting, boils, open wounds or weeping skin lesions). This is to protect you as well as other patients.