

City of Nashua
Division of Public Health and Community Services
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“MRSA” – Resistant *Staph aureus* in the News

A type of bacteria called “MRSA” (pronounced “mir – sa”) has been in the news these past couple of days. The following provides some information about this germ, the illnesses it can cause, and how you can prevent such an infection.

What is MRSA?

- MRSA is short for **M**ethicillin-**R**esistant *Staph aureus*
- It is a type of *Staph aureus* bacteria that can't be treated with some antibiotics
- It is still treatable with other antibiotics
- *Staph* skin infections can look like a pimple or boil
- They can be red, swollen, painful or have pus
- More serious infections may cause pneumonia or bloodstream infections

How Common Are Staph Infections?

- *Staph* bacteria are a natural part of what is on our body
- Up to one out of three people in the general population carry it on their skin and in their noses without having any symptoms of illness
- For some people, though, this can lead to an infection and illness
- Infections and illnesses with MRSA more often happen in the very young, elders, and those who have other serious illnesses; they can also happen among athletes in contact sports, like football, rugby and wrestling

How Can Staph and MRSA Infections Be Prevented?

- Keep your hands clean by frequently washing them with soap and water
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered with a bandage until healed
- Avoid contact with other people's wounds or bandages
- Do not share personal items like towels or razors

Where Can I Find More Information?

- Nashua Division of Public Health and Community Services
MRSA Line 589-4531
Nurse 589-4515
Epidemiologist 589-4554
Environmental Health 589-4536
- Nashua City Web Page www.gonashua.com
- Channel 16 Scroll
- State of New Hampshire www.nh.gov/dhhs/
- Federal Centers for Disease Control www.cdc.gov/cidod/dhap/ar_mrsa.html