



Information for
patients and
carers

**Antenatal screening for Methicillin
Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus
(MRSA)**

Introduction

Our skin is home to a range of bacteria that are generally harmless to us. This is called colonisation. Under certain circumstances, however, some of these bacteria can cause infections that need treating with antibiotics.

Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) is a bacterium that can live harmlessly on our skin but has developed a resistance to many antibiotics. Therefore, if MRSA does cause an infection, for example, in an operation wound, it can be very difficult to treat. If you have MRSA on your skin, but no signs of infection, you are said to be an MRSA carrier. Unfortunately this means that you can unknowingly infect other people.

In a maternity hospital MRSA infections are a particular threat to mothers who have had a caesarean birth and babies who are born prematurely or who are unwell.

Reducing the risk of MRSA

There are a number of simple measures that can reduce the risk of MRSA infections in a maternity hospital:

- Strict attention to hand hygiene by staff, patients and visitors. This includes the use of alcohol hand gel
- Discouraging staff and visitors from sitting on beds
- Identifying women who may be MRSA carriers before they are admitted to hospital (antenatal screening)

Who is offered antenatal MRSA screening?

Pregnant women who fall into the following groups have been identified as being at 'high risk' for MRSA and are offered screening:

- Those booked for an elective Caesarean section
- All pregnant women who have ever had an MRSA infection or who have been found to be a carrier of MRSA
- Those with evidence of skin lesions
- Inpatient transfers from another Trust
- Those women with a urinary catheter in situ

What does antenatal screening for MRSA involve?

Taking swabs (cotton wool buds) from your nose and groin area. It takes approximately 48-72 hours for the laboratory to confirm the presence or absence of MRSA on the swabs.

You will be contacted by telephone if you are found to be an MRSA carrier.

Negative results will be confirmed when you next visit your midwife.

What happens if I am found to be an MRSA carrier?

- You will be asked to collect, from the antenatal clinic, a special lotion with which to wash your hair and skin
- You will be asked to apply antiseptic cream to your nose
- Repeat swabs will be taken after 5 days of treatment followed by a further 2 days with no treatment
- If you are still MRSA positive the treatment may be repeated
- Your planned caesarean will not be delayed if you remain MRSA positive but special precautions will need to be taken

What happens if I am still MRSA positive when I give birth?

- You will be cared for in a single room with your own shower and toilet
- Your ability to care for and feed your baby will not be affected
- Your baby will not be screened for MRSA unless he or she shows signs of infection
- You should not let your visitors sit on your bed and make sure that they wash their hands or use the alcohol gel before they leave your room

Contact details

Should you require further advice or information please contact:
Antenatal clinic, Sharoe Green Unit on **01772 524272**.

Sources of further information

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.patient.co.uk

www.accessable.co.uk

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Please ask if you would like help in understanding this information. This information can be made available in large print and in other languages.

Cantonese:

如果你希望以另外一種格式接收該資訊，請和我們聯絡，不必猶豫。

Gujarati:

જો તમને આ માહિતી બીજી રચના કે ફોર્મેટમાં મેળવવાની ઈચ્છા હોય, તો કૃપા કરી અમારો સંપર્ક કરતા અચકાશો નહિ.

Hungarian:

Kérjük, vegye fel velünk a kapcsolatot, ha más formában kéri ezt az információt.

Polish:

Jeżeli chciał(a)by Pan/Pani otrzymać niniejsze informacje w innym formacie, prosimy o kontakt.

Punjabi:

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਫਾਰਮੈਟ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਨਾ ਝਿਜਕੋ।

Urdu:

اگر آپ اس معلومات کو کسی اور صورت میں حاصل کرنا چاہتے ہیں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کرنے میں ہچکچاہٹ محسوس نہ کریں۔

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