

Where does MRSA come from?

- MRSA infections are found in the community (generally, where there are groups of people), as well as in health care settings.
- Over the years the bacteria have become more resistant to antibiotics. Resistant means the bacteria can no longer be killed by common antibiotics.



How is MRSA spread?

MRSA is spread by:

- Not washing your hands frequently.
- Touching someone with a MRSA infection and not washing your hands.
- Touching anything contaminated with MRSA and not washing your hands.

About Us

The Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH)

CCDPH provides clinical, regulatory and prevention services to protect the health of 2.3 million suburban Cook County (SCC) residents and tens of thousands of people who travel daily through our jurisdiction.

Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Unit

The Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Unit works to prevent and control the spread of over 70 infectious diseases within SCC. This responsibility is achieved through collaboration with those involved in the identification, diagnosis, treatment, and legal, ethical and social management of communicable diseases.

For more information

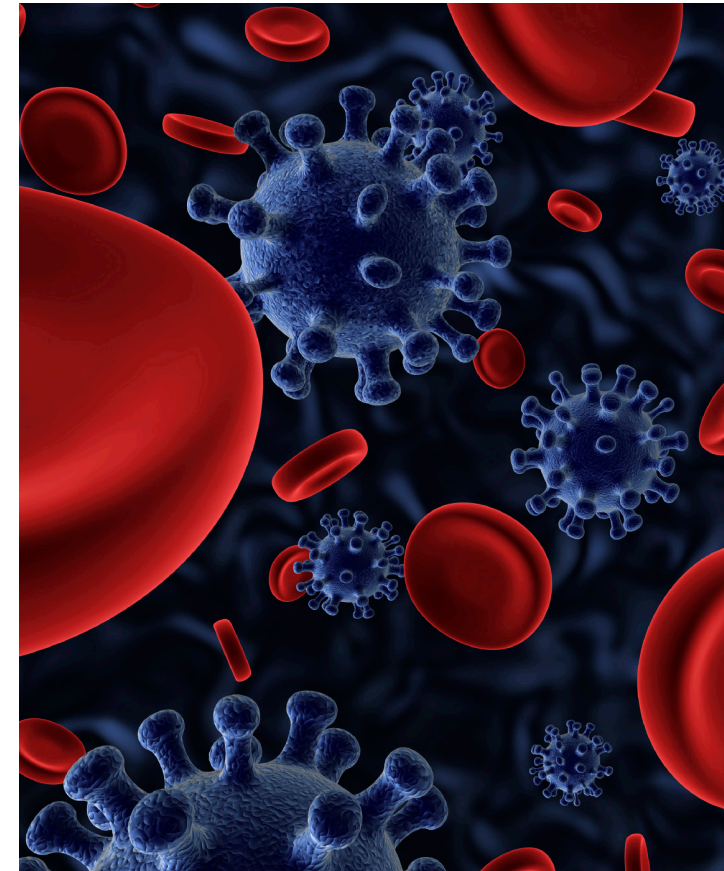
For more information, please visit our website at www.cookcountypublichealth.org/communicable-diseases.

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MRSA

Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus



Understanding and reducing the risks of infection caused by antibiotic-resistant bacteria.



Cook County Department of Public Health

What is MRSA?

- MRSA stands for Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* — a bacterium. While *Staphylococcus aureus* is commonly found on the skin or in noses of healthy people without causing infection, MRSA is a type of staph that is resistant to antibiotics; making it more difficult to treat.
- MRSA is a common cause of minor skin infections, but can also cause more serious infections (such as pneumonia, bloodstream infections, and surgical wound infections). The more serious infections may require hospitalization, especially in people with weakened immune systems.

What do MRSA infections look like?



Photo credit: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ID7826

- Skin infections may be mistaken for a spider bite. The infected area is often red, swollen and painful to touch. Pus may drain from the infected area.

What is MRSA colonization?

- Colonization means that MRSA is present on or in the body without causing infection or an illness.
- People who are either colonized or infected can spread MRSA to other people.
- MRSA infection may spread to other areas of the body.

If you think you have MRSA

- The only way to be certain if you have MRSA is to consult with a doctor. A doctor will determine the best type of treatment.

MRSA Resources

- **The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**
www.cdc.gov/mrsa
- **The Illinois Department of Public Health**
www.idph.state.il.us/health/infect/MRSA_home.htm
- **Cook County Department of Public Health**
www.cookcountypublichealth.org

What you can do to stop the spread of MRSA:

- Keep your hands clean by washing thoroughly and frequently.
- Keep cuts clean and covered with a proper dressing or bandage until they are healed.
- Avoid contact with other people's wounds or anything contaminated by a wound.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as razors, towels, toothbrushes, water bottles and sports equipment that directly touches your body.
- Clean objects such as gym and sports equipment before and after use.
- Shower with soap and water immediately after participating in sports or working out in a gym.
- Wash dirty clothes, linens and towels with hot water and laundry detergent.
- Dry clothes in a hot dryer, rather than air-drying them.
- Take ALL antibiotics as prescribed.
- Do not share antibiotics with anyone.



**Cook County Department
of Public Health**