Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)

What is MRSA?

MRSA is a strain of Staphylococus Aureus, a common bacterium, that has developed resistance to multiple drugs.

MRSA comes in several variants. **Healthcare Organization-Associated MRSA** occurs among persons in hospitals and other healthcare settings, including nursing homes and long-term care facilites.

Community-Associated MRSA can occur in otherwise healthy persons who have not been exposed to a healthcare setting.

How common is MRSA?

-In the United States, 2.3 million people are colonized with MRSA
-Suspected MRSA and Staph. Aureus infections have been diagnosed in 292,000 hospitalized patients and 12 million outpatient visits
-19,000 deaths annually

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Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)

Community concerns

Community solutions

Colonization vs Infection

Colonization: This is when a patient has the MRSA bacteria (in the nose, respiratory tract, wounds, IV catheters, etc.) but **is not sick.**

Infection: This is when the patient has the MRSA bacteria and **IS sick** (signs and symptoms include fever, shortnes of breath, headaches, septic shock, etc.)

How is MRSA transmitted?

Physical Contact! This includes person-to-person contact, as well as contact with **High Touch Surfaces** such as doorknobs, sinks, and countertops that have become colonized with MRSA.

How can I recognize a MRSA infection?

Because S. Aureus can live on a person's skin, external wounds can often become infected with MRSA. Common presentations of cutaneous MRSA infections include:

-Rashes

-Red bumps

-Bullous (blistered) lesions

-Infection of hair follicle (like apimple)

-Abscess, pus-filled mass below skin structures

-pre-existing cuts that become infected

How can I prevent MRSA?

Preventing MRSA is as simple as maintaining excellent hand hygiene. **Wash your hands** thoroughly with soap and water before and after each patient contact! Alternately, alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective.

Studies have shown that compliance with hand hygiene is one of the hardest things to achieve: in other words, getting people to wash their hands is tough! Having **documentation** to remind people to wash their hands and other High Touch Areas, having **easy access** to sinks or hand sanitizer stations, as well as reminding visitors and doctors, would help everybody to stay clean and safe.