



### **What is MRSA**

MRSA is a type of “staph” infection that frequently causes skin infections. In the community MRSA infections are skin infections that may appear as pustules or boils which often are red, swollen, painful, or have pus or drainage. These skin infections commonly occur at sites of visible skin trauma, such as cuts and abrasions, and areas of the body covered by hair (e.g., back of neck, groin, armpit, beard of men).

Almost all MRSA skin infections can be effectively treated by drainage of pus with or without antibiotics. More serious infections, such as pneumonia, bloodstream infections, or bone infections, are very rare in healthy people who get MRSA skin infections.

### **How is MRSA transmitted?**

MRSA is usually transmitted by direct skin-to-skin contact or contact with shared items or surfaces that have come into contact with someone else’s infection (e.g., towels, used bandages).

### **How can you protect yourself from getting MRSA?**

- Good hygiene – Wash Your Hands! Wash Your Hands! Wash Your Hands!  
Keeping your hands clean by washing with soap and water or using an alcohol-based sanitizer. Much of the population does not fully understand the tremendous impact that regular, thorough hand washing has on disease rates, especially in schools. **Hands are the number one cause of the spread of communicable disease.**
- Showering after participating in exercise.
- Covering skin trauma such as abrasions or cuts with a clean dry bandage until healed.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as towels and razors.  
Remind children and teenagers not to share brushes, combs, makeup and cell phones

### **Should schools close because of an MRSA infection?**

The decision to close a school for any communicable disease is made by school officials usually in consultation with local and/or state public health officials. Both the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) are **not** recommending schools be closed because of a MRSA infection in a student.

### **Good websites for information on MRSA**

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)