

APPENDIX

Methicillin-resistant *Staph aureus* (MRSA) prevention/decolonization

Presented by Randall Children's Infectious Diseases

Methicillin-resistant *Staph aureus* (MRSA) prevention

MRSA causes skin infections as well as abscesses (boils), pneumonia and other infections. Good personal and household hygiene helps to prevent the spread of MRSA infection.

- **Wash hands** frequently, especially after contact with an infected person or potentially infected item (bandages, towels, sheets, etc.). Keep nails short and clean.
- **When applying moisturizers or medications** to skin, wash your hands after application and before reaching back into a jar or tub for more.

- **Treat infected areas** of the skin 2–3 times daily with mupirocin ointment and cover with a bandage and/or clothing.
- **Wash all clothing**, towels and bedding of an infected person before re-use. Use the hot cycle on the dryer.
- **Do not share personal items** such as razors, washcloths, towels, uniforms, etc.

Methicillin-resistant *Staph aureus* (MRSA) decolonization

Several things can also be tried to clear MRSA from the skin and nose. Sometimes it is valuable for everyone in the household to do these measures at the same time. These can be done individually or all at once. **None are proven to clear colonization or prevent future infections.**

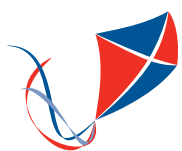
Bleach baths

Note: This is a very dilute solution of bleach that is safe for the skin, even in young children. Risks of use include dryness of skin and irritation to eyes. There will be a slight odor of bleach to the bath.

- Any regular-strength “household” bleach can be used.
- Use a gallon milk jug or a measuring bucket to find out how much water is needed to fill the bathtub for your usual bath. You only need to measure the water level once. Write down the result of your measurement (number of gallons of water you use per bath).
- A small bathtub may hold 40 gallons of water and a large, Jacuzzi-type bathtub may hold 110 gallons

of water. That's why it's important to measure the amount of water needed to fill the bathtub to your desired level in order to get your correct measurement.

- Add 1 teaspoon of bleach per 1 gallon of bath water.
 - ¼ cup bleach is 12 teaspoons and will treat 12 gallons of water in your tub
 - ½ cup bleach is 24 teaspoons and will treat 24 gallons of water in your tub.
- Clean the skin gently with a washcloth (do not use a bath brush, sponge or anything that you are unable to place in the washing machine after use). Clean your scalp and face carefully. Avoid direct contact with the eyes.
- Limit the bath to 10–15 minutes, rinse with regular tap water (a gentle soap and shampoo at this time are fine) and apply a good cream moisturizer or Vaseline after blotting the skin dry.
- Repeat the bath twice weekly (for example on Sunday and Wednesday), usually for three months.



Methicillin-resistant *Staph aureus* (MRSA) decolonization (continued)

Intransal mupirocin (Bactroban)

- **With a cotton swab**, apply a thin layer of mupirocin around the inside rim of each nostril twice a day for 5–10 days. Sometimes it is recommended to repeat the treatment five days in a row each month for 3–6 months.

Chlorhexidine (Hibiclens)

Daily bathing with chlorhexidine

- Do not use on the same day as using bleach baths.
- Wet the skin and lather with 2–4 percent chlorhexidine.
 - Allow the lather to sit on the skin for about a minute before rinsing it off.
 - Apply to all skin from the neck to the toes.
 - Avoid the mucous membranes.
 - Rinse thoroughly and use a good lubricant cream after blotting the skin dry.
- Repeat for a 3–7-day treatment course or long term, if needed.

Find this and other co-management/referral guidelines online at: www.legacyhealth.org/randallguidelines

