



HEALTH BULLETIN

Staphylococcus aureus Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*

What is *Staphylococcus aureus*?

Staphylococcus aureus (commonly called *Staph*) is a common bacterium that lives on the skin. *Staph* can cause an infection when it enters the body through a break in the skin, causing the emergence of relatively minor infections, such as boils, styes, and abscesses. *Staph* can also cause more serious infections.

What is Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*?

Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) is a growing problem in the United States. MRSA is a more virulent form of *Staph* that is resistant to many types of antibiotic treatment. It is transmitted and can infect the body similar to the way *Staph* can.

Prevent the spread of *Staph* and MRSA!

You can prevent the spread of *Staph* and MRSA by taking a few simple, but important precautions:

1. Practice regular hand-hygiene.
 - Wash your hands regularly throughout the day, scrubbing in between fingers and under fingernails.
 - Avoid using bar soaps.
 - Continuously wash for 30 seconds (or about the time it takes to hum “Happy Birthday to You” twice). The use of alcohol hand sanitizer has been found to be effective in reducing the spread of *Staph* and MRSA.
2. Wipe down shared surfaces and equipment.
 - If you are using shared workout equipment, it is important for you to wipe it down before you use it, otherwise you may be exposed to *Staph* or MRSA.
 - Use a clean towel as a barrier between your bare skin and shared surfaces.
3. Do not share personal items, such as razors and towels.
4. Avoid intimate contact with an infected person.
 - Sexual contact can spread *Staph* and MRSA, even if you and your partner are not having penetrative sex.
5. Practice proper wound care.
 - Wash with soap and water.
 - Cover wounds until healed.
 - Wash your hands before and after wound care.
6. See a medical provider if you have more questions regarding *Staph* or MRSA, or if you feel you may have a related infection.
 - UTA students, faculty, and staff can make an appointment to meet with a medical provider at UTA Health Services by calling (817) 272-2771.

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