

What is *Staphylococcus aureus*?

Staphylococcus aureus (*S. aureus*) is a bacteria commonly found on the skin and in the nose of 20-30 percent of healthy individuals. This bacteria often causes skin infections, but can also cause other more serious infections, such as pneumonia or bloodstream infections.

What is MRSA?

Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) is a strain of *S. aureus* that is resistant to methicillin, an antibiotic in the same class as penicillin. MRSA is traditionally seen in people recently hospitalized or who have been treated at a health care facility (such as a dialysis center).

What is CA-MRSA?

Community-associated MRSA (CA-MRSA) infections are considered to be community-associated because they occur in people who have not been hospitalized or had a medical procedure, such as dialysis or surgery, within the past year.

CA-MRSA infections have been documented among athletes, prisoners, military recruits, day care attendees, injection drug users, and others who live in crowded settings or routinely share contaminated items.

What does a CA-MRSA skin infection look like?

A skin infection with CA-MRSA can begin as a reddened area on the skin, or resemble a pimple that can develop into a skin abscess or boil causing fever, pus, swelling or pain.

CA-MRSA skin infections can be treated by a health care professional by incising, draining, and locally caring for the wound. Antibiotics may be administered as necessary. These infections can progress to a more serious and difficult-to-treat stage if not treated properly and promptly.

It is also possible for a pre-existing cut, turfburn or other irritated area on the skin to develop an infection with CA-MRSA if the area is not kept clean and dry.

How is CA-MRSA spread?

CA-MRSA is spread through person-to-person contact or contact with contaminated items such as towels, razors, uniforms and athletic equipment. Poor hygiene practices help facilitate the spread of the bacteria.



Infection site: ankle
May be mistaken for spider bites



How can CA-MRSA skin infections be prevented on MY Team?

Both the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have identified CA-MRSA as a potential problem among athletes. The NCAA recommends practicing good personal hygiene and avoiding contact with infected areas to prevent the transmission of CA-MRSA.

Role as an Educator

- Encourage athletes who participate in sports involving contact (football, wrestling, etc.) to shower with soap as soon as possible after practices and competitions.
- Athletes who share equipment are encouraged to regularly clean this equipment with commercial disinfectants or a solution of one tablespoon of bleach in one quart water.
- Encourage players not to share towels or other personal items such as uniforms or equipment.
- Educate players on the importance of wound care and hand hygiene.

Role as an Administrator

- Ensure availability of adequate soap and hot water.
- Establish routine cleaning schedules for shared equipment, such as towels, uniforms, helmets, athletic equipment and mats.
- If a player has a wound that cannot be covered adequately, consider excluding the player from practice or competitions until the wound can be covered or has completely healed.