



**Community-acquired
MRSA
(CA-MRSA)**

**Fact Sheet for
Students and Parents**

**MTLSD Health Services contact
information is available at
www.mtlsd.org**

What is MRSA?

MRSA is a type of staphylococcus aureus (staph) bacteria normally carried on the skin and in the nose of healthy people. Staph that are resistant to the antibiotic methicillin (and other related antibiotics) are known as **methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus** or MRSA. A different type of antibiotic is used to treat a MRSA infection. When staph are present on or in the body without causing illness it is called "colonization." At any given time, from 20% to 50% of the general population is colonized with staph bacteria and are not ill or infected; some may be MRSA, while others are not.

Who Gets MRSA?

MRSA was primarily seen in the hospital setting among sick and elderly people. Since the late 1990's, studies have shown that MRSA colonization and infections are occurring in healthy children and adults who do not have hospital-associated risk factors. It appears that these people have acquired MRSA in the community. People are more likely to get an infection if they have:

- **Skin to skin contact** with the hands, wound drainage, or nasal secretions of a person who is infected or colonized with MRSA
- **Openings in their skin** such as cuts or abrasions
- **Poor hygiene**
- **Participate in a contact sport**

What are the Symptoms of a skin infection?

- **Tenderness, redness or swelling**

- **Area is warm to touch**
- **Fever**
- **Purulent drainage** (pus)
- **May look like a spider bite, pimple or boil**

How is MRSA diagnosed?

- **Wound culture is taken** by your private Health Care Provider

What are some Strategies to Prevent Infections?

HAND WASHING IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT BEHAVIOR IN PREVENTING INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 15 seconds (or use an alcohol-based sanitizer):

- **After** sneezing, blowing or touching your nose
- **After** using the toilet
- **Before and After** a game or practice
- **Before and After** touching and/or caring for a break in the skin

Other Precautions

- **Shower** with soap and water as soon as possible after direct contact sports
- **Dry** using a clean dry towel
- **Do Not share** equipment, towels, soap or any personal care items
- **Do Not share** towels or drink containers on the sidelines during a game or practice
- **Do Not share** ointments, creams, or antibiotics

- **Keep your hands** away from your nose, mouth and eyes
- **Keep all skin wounds completely covered** with a bandage
- **Wash** towels, equipment, practice uniforms and any other laundry in **hot water and detergent daily**
- **Report a skin rash, boil, abrasion, cut, spider bite or turf burn promptly to the athletic trainer/coach/school nurse and to your parent**

Care and Treatment of a Bacterial Infection

- **Consult** your Private Health Care Provider
- **Tell** your doctor that you are an athlete (a wound culture should be taken)
- **Take all antibiotics** as prescribed by your doctor, even if the infection seems to have healed
- **Inform** your doctor, trainer, and parent, if the wound is not improving
- **Keep the wound covered at all times until completely healed**
- **Bring** a doctor's note to the trainer indicating your diagnosis and treatment plan

All health information shared with school personnel is kept confidential under the law.

The above information is taken from the Centers for Disease Control and the Allegheny County Health Department guidelines.

www.cdc.gov
www.achd.net