

MRSA

Information for patients and visitors

Easy Read

What is MRSA?

- MRSA is a type of **germ**. We all have lots of germs inside our bodies and on our skin which do not cause us harm.
 - These germs do not normally affect healthy people, but sick patients may take longer to get better if they have MRSA.
 - Having MRSA on your skin does not mean that you are ill. We call it being a **carrier** of MRSA.
 - If you are an MRSA carrier and you need to go into hospital for treatment or a test it may be a problem. If MRSA gets into your body through a break in your skin you may get an MRSA **infection**. An infection happens when germs get into your body and make you feel sore, hot and unwell.
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MRSA screening

MRSA screening is a test to see if someone has MRSA on their skin. Screening is usually done at the same time as the other checks you have before you come into hospital, like taking your blood pressure and testing your blood.

We can find out if you are carrying MRSA by using a **swab**. The swab is like a cotton bud.

A nurse will usually use swabs in your **nose**, **throat** and **groin**. Other body sites may also be swabbed, such as wounds.



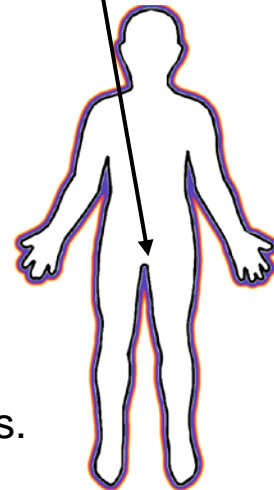
Nose



Throat



Groin



This test does not hurt and only takes a few seconds.

The swabs will be tested for MRSA in a **laboratory**. The results are usually ready in three to five days.

If you have MRSA on your skin, we can give you a simple **treatment** to get rid of as much of the MRSA as possible. The treatment means that you are less likely to get ill from MRSA or give MRSA to other patients.

Treating MRSA

This usually means:

- Washing your body and hair with a special body wash daily.



- Gargling with mouthwash for one minute twice a day.



- Using a special antibiotic cream in your nose




Remember: if you have an infection the doctor can treat it with medicines called antibiotics. Antibiotics kill germs or make them grow more slowly.

More information and advice

Information about the care of people with MRSA in the community can be obtained from Health Protection England, or the Kent Community Health NHS Trust.

NHS 111



 111

NHS Choices online

www.nhs.uk

MTW NHS Trust is committed to making its patient information accessible in a range of languages and formats. If you need this leaflet in another language or format please ask one of your clinical care team or the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). We will do our best to arrange this.

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust welcomes all forms of feedback from our service users. If the standard of service you have received from the Trust does not meet your expectations, we want to hear from you. Please speak with the ward manager or the nurse in charge in the first instance, or you can contact the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** on:

Telephone:  01622 224960 or  01892 632953

Email: mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net

or visit their office at either Maidstone or Tunbridge Wells Hospital between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

You can be confident that your care will not be affected by highlighting any areas of concern or making a complaint. The Trust will retain a record of your contact, which is held separately to any medical records. If you are acting on behalf of a patient, we may need to obtain the patient's consent in order to protect patient confidentiality. More information on PALS or making a complaint can be found on the Trust's website: www.mtw.nhs.uk or pick up a leaflet from main reception.

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