

Guide to Staph and Other Skin Infections

Skin infections are common. *Staphylococcus aureus* (Staph) is one of the more typical types of infection. Thirty percent of people carry Staph on the skin or in the nose without ever getting ill. One percent carries MRSA.

Good hygiene, especially hand washing, is the best defense against skin infections. If you have a skin infection, see your doctor.



What is Staph?

- Staph is a bacteria.
- MRSA (Methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) is resistant to some antibiotics and harder to treat, but treatment is available.



How is Staph treated?

- Must see your doctor.
- May need an antibiotic.
- Doctor may need to drain.



What does it look like?

- A “spider bite”.
- Turf burn.
- Abscess.
- Boils or pimples.
- Infected skin or wound.
- May be red, swollen, painful.
- May have pus or other drainage.



STOP the spread of Staph!



How do you get Staph?

- Skin to skin contact with someone who has Staph.
- Touch surfaces with Staph on them.
- Sharing sports equipment.
- Sharing personal hygiene items (towels, bar soap, clothing).
- Cuts or scrapes in skin.
- Overuse of antibiotics, stopping them early, or missing doses.

- Wash hands frequently.
- Use 60% alcohol based hand gel when soap/water not available.
- Shower immediately after exercise.
- Don't share personal hygiene items (bar soap, razors, towels) or clothing.
- Cover all wounds with clean dry bandage taped on all four sides.
- Stay home if wound drainage cannot be contained by bandage.
- Clean shared equipment between uses.
- Don't touch other people's cuts or bandages.
- Report skin infections to the school nurse.
- See your doctor if you have symptoms of a skin infection.



For more information, see:

http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar_mrsa_ca_public.html

<http://cookcountypublichealth.org/>

<http://www.idph.state.il.us/public/hb/hbmrsa.htm>