

## Going home with MRSA

### Am I a risk to others?

You do not present a risk to generally healthy people (including older people, pregnant women, children, and babies). You can breastfeed and maintain a normal relationship with your partner.

### Work, school, and leisure

MRSA colonisation does not prevent you going about your usual activities, including work, school, socialising, going to the gym etc. You do not need to inform anyone that you have MRSA, unless you work in a healthcare setting, or you seek medical advice.

### Around the house

Special cleaning measures are not required, general good hygiene is sufficient.

Keep surfaces dust-free and regularly vacuum carpets. Clean your bath, shower, basins, and toilets regularly with your usual cleaning products.

Wash your clothes, bedding, and linen as normal using your usual detergent. You can tumble dry or line dry and iron clothes as normal.

### Pets

Pets pose minimal risk in the spread of MRSA.



## MRSA positive? Here's what to do

Information for patients who are identified as MRSA carriers

**If you are concerned about MRSA or would like to find out more, you can ask your nurse or doctor.**

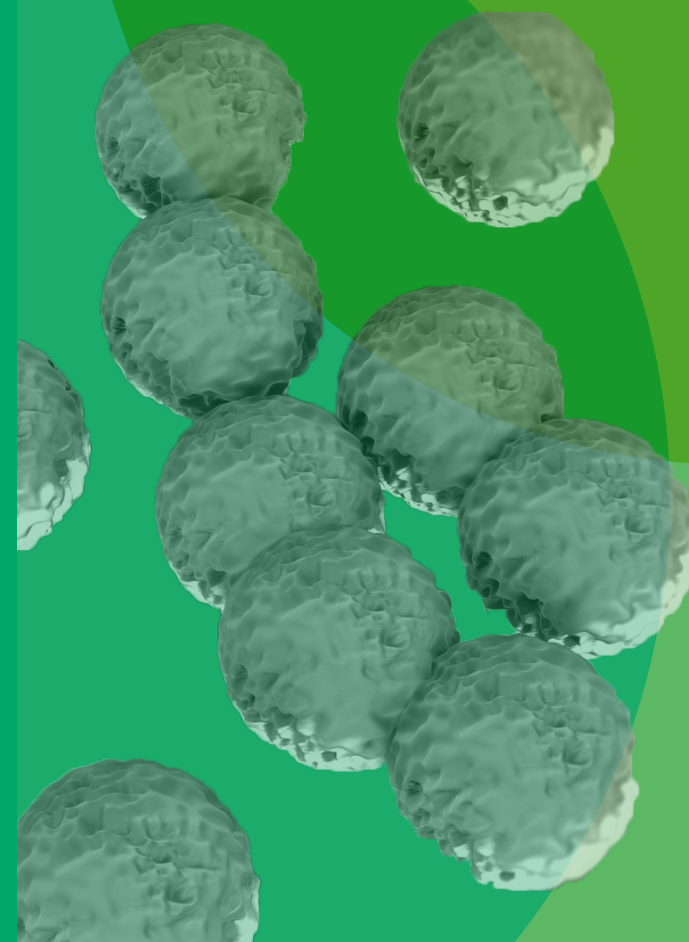
MRSA Action UK have more information including what to do when you go to hospital.

They also support people who have been affected by MRSA.

Visit or email:  
**[mrsaactionuk.net](http://mrsaactionuk.net)**  
**[info@mrsaactionuk.net](mailto:info@mrsaactionuk.net)**



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## What is the risk to my health?

Many people carry MRSA, and they may never get ill. This is called 'colonisation'.

Problems start when people are poorly or when they have treatments which provide an opportunity for MRSA to enter the body and cause infections. Examples of situations when you are at risk of infection include:

- You are in an intensive care unit (ICU)
- Your immune system is weakened
- You are having an operation
- You have a wound
- You have a medical device inserted into your body, e.g. a catheter or drip (intravenous line, or 'IV')

The type of infection you could get depends on where MRSA entered your body. For example, if you had an operation, you are more at risk of getting a surgical wound infection. If you have an IV line, you can get a bloodstream infection. Other infections can include:

- Wound infections
- Pneumonia (chest infection)
- Urinary tract infection (UTI)
- Pimples or boils

Sometimes a person can develop a serious reaction to infection. This is called 'sepsis' and may be life threatening.

## Signs of MRSA infection

Signs of MRSA infection will be the same as other bacterial infections, and will depend on where you develop an infection.

Laboratory tests, usually of blood or swabs, are needed to find out if the infection is caused by MRSA.

This may mean you need to stay longer in hospital.

## What can I do to prevent infection?

- Follow the advice you are given by your doctor
- Cover any skin breaks with dressings (including where tubes are entering your body)
- Wash your hands before and after changing dressings
- Avoid touching wounds
- Don't touch any tubes or devices inserted into your body



## Will I be treated differently in hospital?

On the whole, colonisation with MRSA does not require treatment. However, you may still be at risk of infection, or you may be a risk to other patients. In some circumstances additional precautions may be taken to avoid these risks.

If you are undergoing surgery, your doctor may recommend that you need to be 'decolonised'. This means removing as much of the MRSA as possible from the places on the body where it is living. Decolonisation treatment may be given either in hospital or at home. It will usually include treatment with antiseptic bodywash, shampoo and nasal cream. A few days of treatment will usually get rid of the MRSA, and is usually enough so that you can undergo surgery safely.

If you are in hospital, it is important to prevent the MRSA from being transferred to other patients. To avoid this, the hospital may decide to:

- place you in a single room or an area specifically for MRSA patients
- prescribe a course of decolonisation treatment

Don't worry, hospitals will not refuse you treatment, stop you from receiving visitors or delay you going home.