

# MRSA Nose and Skin Decolonization for Inpatients

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## **What are *Staphylococcus aureus* and MRSA?**

*Staphylococcus aureus*, or “staph,” is a germ that lives on the skin and in the noses of many healthy people. **Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA)** is a type of staph that is resistant to the antibiotics that are commonly used to treat staph infections. When you are in the hospital, having MRSA on your skin or in your nose can lead to more serious infections such as pneumonia, wound infections, or bloodstream infections.

## **What is MRSA nose and skin decolonization?**

**Decolonization** means decreasing the germs and bacteria from your body. If you take a test that shows you have MRSA in your body, this means that you also have MRSA on your skin and in your nose. **MRSA nose and skin decolonization** is a treatment that uses special ointment and wipes that kill MRSA and keep it from causing a more serious infection.

## **Why are you putting ointment in my nose and using wipes on my skin?**

The ointment we put in your nose contains an antibiotic that will kill any MRSA found in your nose. The wipes we use on your skin are antimicrobial (germ-killing) wipes that contain a cleanser called **chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG)**. CHG will kill any MRSA on your skin.

## **How long will my MRSA nose and skin decolonization treatment last?**

- We will put antibiotic ointment in your nose using a cotton swab 2 times a day for 5 days.

- We will use CHG wipes on your skin once a day for at least 5 days. If you have a central line, you will continue to use CHG wipes once a day until your central line is removed.

## **What else are staff doing to protect me and others from getting a MRSA infection?**

To protect you and others from getting a MRSA infection in the hospital, staff will clean their hands whenever they enter and leave your room. Any equipment used for your care will be disinfected before it is brought into your room and after it leaves your room. If you have a MRSA infection in a large, open wound, staff will also wear gowns and gloves when caring for you.

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