



PATIENT INFORMATION

The facts about Meticillin Sensitive *Staphylococcus aureus* (MSSA)

You have been found to be MSSA positive in a nose swab taken at your pre assessment clinic appointment. This is nothing to be concerned about as 30% of the population carry this. It just allows us to reduce the risk of you getting an infection after surgery.

This leaflet explains more about it.

What is MSSA?

Meticillin-sensitive *Staphylococcus Aureus* (MSSA) is a type of bacteria which lives harmlessly on the skin and in the nose, in approximately 30% of the population. People who have MSSA on their skin or in their nose are said to be colonised. MSSA colonisation usually causes no problems, but can cause an infection when it gets the opportunity to enter the body, for example a surgical wound. MSSA can cause post-operative wound infections that can take weeks of antibiotic to treat.

Why Screen?

After surgery, there is a wound in the skin which takes days to heal completely and during this time micro-organisms can spread from the surrounding skin into the wound. If MSSA is on your body and enters a wound it can cause an infection. We do not routinely screen all patients for MSSA; however, in high risk groups MSSA screening is performed.

How is MSSA treated?

MSSA is treated prior to surgery with a body wash and nasal ointment which will significantly reduce or remove the number of MSSA bacteria on your body. Treatment should start 2 days prior to surgery and continue for 5 days. The treatment includes:

Nasal ointment for your nose

An antiseptic wash which you use to wash your hands, body, face and hair

Is MSSA the same as MRSA?

No, whilst they are the same type of bacteria, you have been found to have the common one that responds well if required to antibiotic therapy, which means it is more easily treated. With MRSA the bacteria have become resistant to some of these treatments and are therefore harder to treat.

Will this affect my family or friends?

No MSSA does no harm to healthy people, including pregnant women, children and babies.

What will happen to me whilst I'm in hospital?

Once your doctors have identified that you have MSSA, you will be prescribed the appropriate treatment. MSSA is a common bacterium and the staff will not treat you any differently than other patients.

Will MSSA stop me going home from hospital?

No. If you are well enough to go home you will still be able to do so. Once back home, you can mix normally with family and friends.

Remember - this is a bacteria found mainly in the nose and on the skin in over 30% of the population and causes no problem at all.

If you have any questions about the information in this leaflet, please contact:

The Infection Control Support Department (Tel. (01803) 655757