

## MRSA

During the stay at the hospital it was emerged that you or your child (possibly) have an MRSA bacterial infection (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus). This leaflet explains what MRSA is, why nursing in an isolated room is required and what other measures are necessary.

### What is MRSA?

MRSA is a variant of the Staphylococcus aureus bacterium. This is a bacterium many people carry, without falling ill. The bacterium is usually found on the skin or in the nose.

The most important difference between the ordinary Staphylococcus aureus and the MRSA is the way it is treated. Infections caused by Staphylococcus aureus can be treated with the usual antibiotics. MRSA, however, is resistant to a number of commonly used antibiotics. Special antibiotics are therefore needed to treat MRSA infections.

MRSA is also called the hospital bug, because the bacterium mainly causes problems in hospitals. The risk of infection is greater in a hospital than at home, because in a hospital there are many people with reduced resistance are in close proximity to each other. In hospitals MRSA may cause infections in surgical wounds with sometimes serious consequences.

### MRSA examination

In order to establish whether you have MRSA, the nurse will take swabs from

your nose, throat, anus and any wounds by using special cotton buds. Sometimes also urine and/or sputum will be examined. These swabs will then be analysed in the lab to see if they contain any MRSA bacteria.

### Results

The results of the swabs are usually available within 2-3 days. If you are infected by MRSA bacteria, the attending physician or nurse will inform you as soon as possible. You will then be informed of what measures will be necessary.

If the MRSA culture has a negative result (i.e. no MRSA) the isolation measures in the hospital are no longer necessary.

### Isolation measures

Because of the fact that treatment possibilities are therefore limited, hospitals do their utmost to prevent MRSA spreading throughout the hospital. All measures taken aim at a quick detection of MRSA and prevention of its spreading.

Because you or your child are/is (possibly) infected with the MRSA bacterium, isolation measures will be put in place during the stay which will prevent the spreading of the MRSA bacterium to other patients in the hospital.

This will mean that:

- You or your child will receive medical care in a separate room, an isolation

room. The door(s) must remain closed.

- Hospital staff entering the room will be wearing gown, a mouth/nose mask, gloves and a cap.
- If you or your child need to go to a different department for an examination, precautionary measures will be taken there to prevent the spreading of MRSA.

### **Treatment**

What the MRSA treatment entails, depends on the location of the infection. Treatment may consist of using a nose ointment and washing with disinfecting soap. Sometimes you are also given antibiotics.

Treatment is determined by the medical microbiologist in consultation with your attending physician or general practitioner.

### **MRSA at the paediatric ward**

If your child is in an isolation room due to suspected or proven MRSA you - as its parent - may stay in the room with your child day and night. Consequently, you may also be or become a carrier of the bacteria. We will therefore regard you as a possibly infected person during your child's isolation period. You may therefore not make use of communal areas.

### **Visit**

- Visitors must report to the nurse for an explanation of the measures.
- Visitors do not have to wear protective clothing.
- If they leave the room they should use hand alcohol.
- If visitors also visit another patient in the hospital they have to visit this patient first.
- If visitors are working as care worker then they are asked to follow any extra instructions from the nurse.

### **Treatment at home**

If you receive treatment from, for example, a physiotherapist or district nurse, we ask you to report beforehand that you have an MRSA infection so that necessary measures can then be taken.

### **Check**

If you or your child attend the policlinic, if you or your child are/is admitted in this or a different hospital, it is important that you inform the hospital staff that you or your child are/is an MRSA carrier.

### **Questions**

We are always willing to answer any questions and to handle any problems. In the first instance please contact the attending physician and the nursing staff.

### **Notes on this leaflet**

If any information in this leaflet is unclear or incomplete, please notify us. You can share your remarks with us via [voorlichting@zha.nl](mailto:voorlichting@zha.nl).