



# MRSA: The Battle to Prevent Infection

## MRSA: Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus Aureus* ADVANCE THE BATTLE TO PREVENT INFECTION IN GROUPS AND COMMUNITY SETTINGS

### Join the battle to prevent infection: **WASH YOUR HANDS!**

Germs live on people and the things they touch. Germs are all around us — at home, in the community and in hospitals. Some germs are difficult to treat and resistant to common antibiotics. MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) is a resistant germ. MRSA and other germs can spread to other people when people touch their nose or mouth and do not wash their hands.

### MRSA CAN:

- Be carried by people who look healthy and have no symptoms of infection
- Spread from person to person on hands and anywhere hands touch
- Be carried by people who do not know they have MRSA
- Infect anyone
- Be very hard to treat with common antibiotics
- Make sick people even more sick

### *Hand-to-Hand Combat to Prevent Infection*

*Our battle plan to prevent germs from spreading and causing infection is simple, yet effective — “Hand-to-Hand Combat.”*

### YOU SHOULD WASH OR CLEAN YOUR HANDS:

- Before and after eating
- After using the toilet
- Before entering and after leaving a patient’s room
- Before and after changing a bandage or a diaper for adults or children
- After coughing or sneezing into your hands
- Before and after handling food and raw meats

*Hand washing or cleaning is the front line for stopping the spread of germs from person to person.*



**TO CLEAN YOUR HANDS WITH SOAP AND WATER:**

1. Wet your hands with warm water.
2. Apply soap and rub your hands together for at least 15 seconds.
3. Rub your palms, fingernails, in between your fingers and the backs of your hands.
4. Rinse and dry your hands.
5. Turn the water off with a clean paper towel if you are in a public restroom.

**TO CLEAN YOUR HANDS WITH ALCOHOL FOAM:**

1. Use alcohol foam hand cleaner when your hands do not look dirty.
2. Rub the alcohol foam hand cleaner all over your hands, under your nails and between your fingers. Rub until your hands are dry.

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***Not sure what to use?  
Wash with soap and water.***

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**AS PART OF VA'S EFFORT TO HELP STAFF AND VETERANS WIN THIS BATTLE YOUR HEALTH CARE TEAM MAY:**

- Teach Veterans and the VA community how to stop the spread of these resistant germs
- Test patients for the MRSA germ if they go into the hospital or are going to have special procedures that can increase the risk of getting an infection from MRSA
- Place patients with MRSA in a private room or with other patients who have the same germ

**YOU MAY SEE VA HEALTH CARE WORKERS:**

- Wash their hands or use hand cleaner before and after caring for every patient
- In some situations, wear gloves and gowns when caring for patients with MRSA infections

**IT'S OK TO ASK HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS IF THEY HAVE CLEANED THEIR HANDS.**

Stop MRSA and other germs. Together we can make our facilities safer for patients, visitors and staff.



**INFECTION CONTROL**  
*is in everyone's hands*

***To prevent infections, we need your help! Keep Veterans and our community healthy! Defeat the germs! Win the battle!***



GULF COAST VETERANS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM  
PATIENT EDUCATION | MRSA: The Battle  
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