

### Advice on hand disinfection

Ensure your hands are dry. Cup your hands and completely cover in hand sanitiser (you will need approximately 3–5 ml or two to three pumps on the dispenser). Rub into hands for about 30 seconds until hands are dry again. It is very important to disinfect the tips of your fingers and thumbs, palms and between your fin-gers!

### Living with MRSA

Outside a hospital setting the risk of transmission and illness is very low.

At home you can carry on with your life as usual with your usual social contact, even if decolo-nisation was not possible.

The same applies if you are living in shared or sheltered accommodation.

There is no increased risk for bacterial transmission for healthy individuals, pregnant women or children. It is, however, important to be careful if you have physical contact with people who have open wounds, or tumour or leukaemia diseases.

In a care home measures may be arranged that are similar to those in a hospital, to reduce the risk of transmission to other residents. How and for how long these measures are employed is decided by your GP and the care home management.

Your local contact is your local  
Health Authority



### Additional information

Baden-Württemberg State Health Office  
(Landesgesundheitsamt Baden-Württemberg)  
Coordinating body: BW MRSA Network  
mre-netzwerk@rps.bwl.de  
www.mre-netzwerk-bw.de

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Landesgesundheitsamt Baden-Württemberg  
im Regierungspräsidium Stuttgart  
Nordbahnhofstr. 135 · 70191 Stuttgart  
Tel. 0711 904-35000 · Fax 0711 904-35010  
abteilung9@rps.bwl.de · www.rp-stuttgart.de  
www.gesundheitsamt-bw.de



## Information on MRSA for hospital patients



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## Dear Patient,

A microbiological smear test that is part of your hospital treatment has detected a bacterium that is difficult to treat with suitable antibiotics if it leads to an infection. This fact sheet has important information about the bacterium and the necessary hygiene measures to prevent it from spreading.

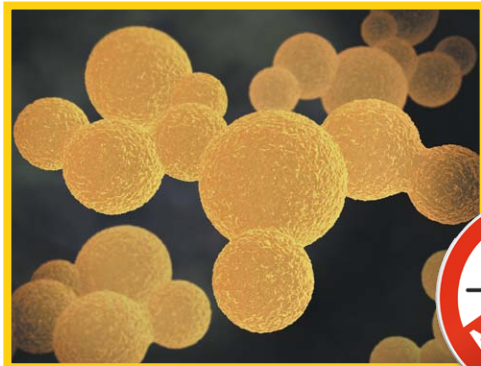
## General information

We are all host to a large number of bacteria, and millions of these microbes live on the skin, mucous membranes and especially in the intestines.

The bacterium *Staphylococcus aureus* can be found in the front section of the nose and sometimes on the skin of many healthy people without making the host ill.

When it becomes resistant to various antibiotics it is called MRSA: **M**ulti-**R**esistant or **M**ethicillin-**R**esistant **S**taphylococcus **aureus**.

MRSA usually poses no danger to healthy individuals outside the hospital. When it comes into contact with hospital patients, there is a risk of transmission and of infectious illness if the patient has an injury or undergoes a medical procedure, for instance if the bacteria travel from the skin and mucous membranes into the underlying tissue and then into the rest of the body.



Once in the body it can cause inflammation and abscesses, and in patients with a weakened immune system it can also lead to serious infections, such as blood poisoning and pneumonia.

As many antibiotics are no longer effective against MRSA an infection can often only be treated with active ingredients generally held in reserve and even these are sometimes unsuccessful.

If the pathogens are only on the skin without causing illness this is called a colonisation. In this case, certain measures can be taken to remove the bacteria from the skin. These measures would be full body washes, mouth rinses with antiseptic active substances and the use of an effective nasal ointment.

## Why do these measures need to be taken in the hospital?

Unlike healthy people, hospital patients are at a higher risk of infection for a number of reasons.

Hospital patients are particularly susceptible to pathogens in their environment. They are more at risk because of illness, requiring acute hospital treatment or maybe injuries, recent surgery, a catheter or artificial respiration, or therapies that

place a strain on the body and a weakened immune system because of current or chronic diseases. As an additional infection with MRSA can be a complication in this situation, everything has to be done to prevent this bacterium from spreading in the hospital.

This is achieved with simple yet effective hygiene measures:

- Your doctor has arranged for you to be what is known as isolated. This is why you cannot leave your room without permission from the staff.
- The hospital staff and your visitors have to wear protective clothing when they enter your room to prevent passing on the infection to other people. This clothing comprises a protective gown, disposable gloves and maybe also a mouth-nose protective mask. Visitors will be given detailed information by staff.
- Visitors should not sit on your bed.
- Hand disinfection is very important to prevent the bacterium from spreading. For this reason everyone (you, visitors and staff) have to disinfect their hands immediately whenever they leave the room; staff and visitors have to take off their gown first.
- Nobody may leave the room or the anteroom wearing the gown – even for a short time.