

# Don't Mess With MRSA

## What is MRSA? (pronounced mer-sah)

MRSA is short for Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, a type of bacteria that is resistant to many antibiotics. Sometimes it is called a “superbug.”



MRSA magnified  
20,000X

## What does a MRSA infection look like?

Most staph infections, including MRSA, appear as a bump or infected area on the skin. Skin may be:

★ **Red**   ★ **Swollen**   ★ **Painful**  
★ **Warm to the touch**   ★ **Full of pus**

While rare in healthy people, invasive MRSA infections can occur if MRSA bacteria get into the bloodstream and attack other tissues and organs. These infections can cause serious and even fatal disease. If you think you might have a MRSA infection, visit a healthcare provider.



A MRSA skin infection  
may look like pimples.

## How do I lower my risk?

- **Wash your hands** often, especially if you are visiting someone in a hospital.
- Speak up and **ask healthcare providers to wash hands** or use hand sanitizer before examining you.
- **Don't share personal items** such as towels or razors with another person.
- **Cover a wound** with a clean bandage, and avoid contact with other people's soiled bandages.
- **Clean shared sports equipment** with antiseptic before using.
- **Avoid using common whirlpools or saunas** with someone who has an open sore.
- Check that **shared bathing facilities are clean.**
- **Wear clean clothes daily**—especially important when clothes have become sweaty.
- The nose is a MRSA breeding ground. **Keep fingers out.**



**NO NEED TO PANIC!**

Most people infected by  
MRSA develop treatable  
skin infections.

