



**Oklahoma Joint
Reconstruction Institute**

Paul B. Jacob, DO

Infection Prevention and Control

Pre-operative M.R.S.A. Screening- Information for Patients

This information is designed for patients undergoing MRSA screening before coming into the hospital for a planned operation. Dr. Jacob and the Oklahoma Joint Reconstruction Institute take MRSA and healthcare associated infections seriously. They are committed to reducing infections in our hospitals and giving our patients high quality health care.

What is MRSA?

MRSA stands for **(M)** Methicillin **(R)** Resistant **(S)** Staphylococcus **(A)** Aureus.

There are lots of germs on our skin and in the environment around us. Most of them are harmless and some are beneficial. However there are a very small proportion of germs that can cause harm. Staphylococcus Aureus is a common germ that is found on the skin and in the nostrils of about 1/3 of healthy people. It can cause infections. MRSA is a type of Staphylococcus Aureus that has developed resistance to antibiotic medicine called Methicillin (a type of penicillin) and some other antibiotics that are used to treat infections.

Why do we screen for MRSA?

There are many people in the community, known as carriers, who may have the MRSA germ without showing any symptoms. By screening these patients by performing a simple swab test of their nose before your operation, we can find out who is carrying the germ and provide treatment for them before they are admitted to hospital. As part of the pre-operative process, patients will be routinely screened for MRSA. This helps to prevent the spread of the germ and lowers the risk of complications occurring after surgery.

How can MRSA affect me?

MRSA may colonize your body and/or cause infection.



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MRSA Colonization

Most people who have MRSA are carriers, and the bacteria are colonized on their skin. This means that MRSA is present on the surface of the skin and does not cause any harm to the person. They will have no signs or symptoms of infection and feel well. However, if you come into hospital to undergo a procedure, there may be an opportunity for MRSA to enter the body. This is why patients found to be colonized with MRSA will be given a skin wash to remove the germ from the skin and nasal ointment to remove MRSA from the nose.

MRSA Infection

MRSA may cause harm when it gets the opportunity to enter the body. MRSA can cause simple infections such as pimples, boils or more serious problems such as wound infections, chest infections or blood stream infections (septicemia). If a patient has an infection caused by MRSA, then the number of antibiotics that can be given to the patient that are effective in treatment of MRSA is limited because of antibiotic resistance.

What tests are done to look for MRSA?

The nurse will take a swab from your nose which involves a cotton bud swab being placed in your nostril. The test will not hurt but might feel a little uncomfortable. The swab is then sent to the laboratory for testing.

How long will the swab results take?

The results usually take three to four working days.

What happens next?

If your swab is found to be MRSA negative (this means **no MRSA** was detected) you will not hear from us. You will wash with a special soap (Hibiclens) for 3 days prior to your surgery. If your swab is found to be **MRSA positive**, you will be notified. You will wash with a special soap (Hibiclens) for 7 days prior to your surgery **PLUS** be given a prescription for a nasal ointment (Mupirocin). You will apply the nasal ointment to your nostrils two times daily for five consecutive days prior to your surgery. This ointment may burn or make your eyes tear.

Treatment for MRSA



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Bactroban Nasal Ointment (Mupirocin 2%) Application

If MRSA is found so you will need to use Bactroban Nasal Ointment (Mupirocin 2%). Use it two times each day for 5 days. A small amount of ointment, about the size of a match head, should be placed on a cotton bud or on your finger and applied to the inside of each nostril (apply to the front part of the nostril). The nostrils should be closed by pressing the sides of the nose together; this will spread the ointment through the nostrils.

Hibiclens Body Wash (Chlorhexidine) Method of application

- Ensure all skin surfaces are covered when using the body wash.
- Ensure that your hair and body are wet.
- Put soap onto a damp disposable wet cloth.
- Apply soap all over hair and body, paying special attention to your armpits groin and feet.
- Leave the lotion on your skin for one minute before rinsing.
- Rinse off thoroughly
- Dry with a new **clean**, dry towel.
- Put on **clean** underclothes or nightwear every day.
- Ensure all bed linen and towels are changed daily and washed on the highest possible temperature.

Schedule

- 7 Days prior to surgery: Hibiclens Body Wash
- 6 Days prior to surgery: Hibiclens Body Wash
- 5 Days prior to surgery: Hibiclens Body Wash + Bactroban Nasal Ointment
- 4 Days prior to surgery: Hibiclens Body Wash + Bactroban Nasal Ointment
- 3 Days prior to surgery: Hibiclens Body Wash + Bactroban Nasal Ointment
- 2 Days prior to surgery: Hibiclens Body Wash + Bactroban Nasal Ointment
- 1 Days prior to surgery: Hibiclens Body Wash + Bactroban Nasal Ointment