



P.O. Box: 48577, **DUBAI**, U.A.E.
Tel: 04 267 8866, Fax: 04 267 8855
P.O. Box: 457, **SHARJAH**, U.A.E.
Tel: 06 565 8866, Fax: 06 565 6899

ص.ب. ٤٨٥٧٧، دبي، ا.ع.م.
هاتف: ٠٤ ٢٦٧ ٨٨٦٦ - فاكس: ٠٤ ٢٦٧ ٨٨٥٥
ص.ب. ٤٥٧، الشارقة، ا.ع.م.
هاتف: ٠٦ ٥٦٥ ٨٨٦٦ - فاكس: ٠٦ ٥٦٥ ٦٨٩٩

E-mail: info@zulekha-hospitals.com • Website: www.zulekha-hospitals.com



MRSA INFECTION



Below are answers to some common questions...

What is *Staphylococcus aureus* or Staph?

Staph is a type of bacteria. It may cause skin infections that look like pimples or boils. Skin infections caused by Staph may be red, swollen, painful, or have pus or other drainage. The information on this page applies to both Staph and MRSA.

Who gets Staph infections?

Anyone can get a Staph infection. People are more likely to get a Staph infection if they have:

- Skin-to-skin contact with someone who has a Staph infection
- Contact with items and surfaces that have Staph on them
- Sharing personal items, such as towels or razors, that have touched infected skin
- Openings in their skin such as cuts or scrapes
- Crowded living conditions
- Poor hygiene



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TE : 06 565 8866, Fax: 06 555 8888

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مركز مستشفى ذليخة، دبي، الإمارات العربية المتحدة

هاتف: 04 267 8866، فاكس: 04 267 8855

مركز مستشفى ذليخة، الشارقة، الإمارات العربية المتحدة

هاتف: 06 565 8866، فاكس: 06 555 8888



How serious are Staph infections?

Most Staph skin infections are minor and may be easily treated. Staph also may cause more serious infections, such as infections of the bloodstream, surgical sites, or pneumonia. Sometimes, a Staph infection that starts as a skin infection may worsen. *It is important to contact your doctor if your infection does not get better.*

How are Staph infections treated?

Treatment for a Staph skin infection may include taking an antibiotic or having a doctor drain the infection. *If you are given an antibiotic, be sure to take all of the doses, even if the infection is getting better, unless your doctor tells you to stop taking it.* Do not share antibiotics with other people or save them to use later

What is MRSA?

MRSA is Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus Aureus*, a potentially dangerous type of staph bacteria that is resistant to Most antibiotics and may cause skin and other infections. As with all regular staph infections, recognizing the signs and receiving treatment for MRSA skin infections in the early stages reduces the chances of the infection becoming severe. MRSA is spread by similar routes as that of staph aureus:

What are the signs and symptoms?

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

- > Red, Swollen, Painful, Warm to the touch
- > Full of pus or other drainage
- > Accompanied by a fever

What if I suspect an MRSA skin infection?

Cover the area with a bandage and contact your healthcare professional. It is especially important to contact your healthcare professional if signs and symptoms of an MRSA skin infection are accompanied by a fever.

How are MRSA skin infections treated?

Treatment for MRSA skin infections may include having a healthcare professional drain the infection and, in some cases, prescribe an antibiotic. Do not attempt to drain the infection yourself – doing so could worsen or spread it to others. If you are given an antibiotic, be sure to take all of the doses (even if the infection is getting better), unless your healthcare professional tells you to stop taking it.



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How can I protect my family from Staph infections / MRSA skin infections?

- Know the signs of MRSA skin infections and get treated early
- Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered them with bandages
- Do not touch other people's cuts or bandages
- Encourage good hygiene such as cleaning hands regularly or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Discourage sharing of personal items such as towels and razors

If I have a Staph, or MRSA skin infections, what can I do to prevent others from getting infected?

1: Cover your Wound. Keep wounds that are draining or have pus covered with clean, dry bandages until healed. Follow your healthcare provider's instructions on proper care of the wound. Pus from infected wounds can contain staph, including MRSA, so keeping the infection covered will help prevent the spread to others. Bandages and tape can be discarded with regular trash

2: Clean your hands. You, your family, and others in close contact should wash their hands frequently with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, especially after changing the bandage or touching the infected wound.

3: Do not share personal items. Avoid sharing personal items, such as towels, washcloths, razors, clothing, or uniforms that may have had contact with the infected wound or bandage. Wash sheets, towels, and clothes that become soiled with water and laundry detergent. Use a dryer to dry clothes completely.

Talk to your doctor: Tell any healthcare providers who treat you that you have or had a staph or MRSA skin infection

If you have any questions about your condition, please ask your doctor.