

## ***Alert from the Health Desk!!*** ***Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)*** **or Staphylococcus aureus in the Community: Cause and Management**

We are now hearing or reading numerous articles about these infections that are not new but usually occurred in the hospital setting.

### **Some answers to your questions:**

#### **What is Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) or Staphylococcus aureus ?**

Staphylococcus(staph) is a type of bacteria. It may cause skin infections that look like a rash, pimples or boils. Skin infections caused by Staph may be red, swollen, painful, or have pus or other drainage. Some Staph (known as Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* or MRSA) are resistant to certain antibiotics, making it harder to treat.

The information on this page applies to both Staph and MRSA.

#### **How is it acquired?**

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

1. Skin-to-skin contact with someone who has a Staph infection
2. Contact with items and surfaces that have Staph on them
3. Openings in their skin such as cuts or scrapes
4. Crowded living conditions
5. Poor hygiene

#### **How serious are these infections?**

- Most MRSA or other Staph skin infections are minor and may be easily treated.
- They may cause more serious infections, such as infections of the bloodstream, surgical sites, or pneumonia.
- These infections that start as a skin infection may continue and not heal.
- It is important to contact a doctor if infection does not get better and needs to be covered until treatment to decrease spread to others.

#### **What is the Treatment?**

- Treatment for these skin infections may include taking a special medication or antibiotic or having a doctor drain the infection.

- If given an antibiotic, be sure to take all of the doses, even if the infection is getting better.
- Do not share antibiotics with other people or save them to use later.

### **How can we prevent the spread of these skin infections?**

- The most effective way to prevent the spread of any communicable disease is to **Wash your hands often.**
- Continue to follow the standards of cleaning and disinfecting in your center or home.
- Continue to use proper diapering procedures especially cleaning diaper table carefully after each use.
- Keep your cuts and scrapes clean and cover them with bandages
- Do not touch other people's cuts or bandages
- Do not share personal items like towels or razors.

If a child in your center develops please contact our local Dept. of Health or Contact your Child Care Health consultant coordinators listed on this site. For more information, please visit:

**[http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar\\_mrsa.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar_mrsa.html).**