

My animal has MRSA, how can I avoid becoming infected?

- **Follow your veterinarian's instructions.**
 - Use good hand hygiene (handwashing or alcohol hand sanitizer) before and after contact with the infected animal.
 - Use gloves when handling or in contact with any blood or body fluid or when caring for wounds.
 - Keep open wounds covered.
 - Clean and disinfect items and surfaces that had contact with the infected animal using an EPA product (EPA number will be on the label) effective against MRSA following the directions on the label or with a bleach solution (1 tablespoon to 1 quart of water).
 - Wash any items that become soiled by the animal separately from the other laundry, using hot water and laundry detergent (and bleach if possible). Dry in a dryer on hot. This will help kill the bacteria.
 - Anyone in your household that is immunocompromised, has recently had surgery, is very young, or is elderly should avoid contact with the infected animal or items soiled by the animal. **Contact your physician for more information.**

What should I do if I have? signs of an infection?

Contact your physician if you notice a boil or area that is red and swollen or looks like a "spider bite" or if you have any other signs of infection.

For more information,
please visit these web sites:

Texas Department of State Health Services
www.dshs.state.tx.us
Centers for Disease Control
www.cdc.gov



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY

Kit Darling, MS, CIC, M, MT (ASCP)
Infection Prevention Coordinator

Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital

College of Veterinary Medicine
& Biomedical Sciences

Texas A&M University
4457 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-4457
Tel 979.412.3153

www.vmth.tamu.edu

Texas A&M University
Veterinary Medical
Teaching Hospital
Infection Prevention



**Methicillin-resistant
Staphylococcus aureus
(MRSA)**

Client Information Series



What is MRSA?

Both humans and animals are routinely exposed to the bacteria called *Staphylococcus aureus* without harmful effects. Some *Staphylococcus aureus* have acquired a trait called “methicillin-resistance” and are called **MRSA**. Sometimes MRSA causes infections, most of which are minor and easily treated. They may, however, cause more serious infections that are difficult to treat.

How is MRSA transmitted?

MRSA may be transmitted person to person, animal to animal, human to animal and animal to human. The most common way MRSA is transmitted is direct skin-to-skin contact or through indirect contact with objects or the environment.

What are the symptoms in animals?

MRSA most often **causes skin or wound infection**; however, the bacteria may also cause urinary tract infections, bloodstream infections, or pneumonia. MRSA infection may be suspected when the animal has one of the following:

- Chronic non-healing wound
- Persistent drainage/draining tract
- Post surgical wound
- Recurring urinary tract infections
- Recurring ear infections

Let your veterinarian know if you have another animal or family member in the household with MRSA.



Good personal hygiene, such as hand washing, is very important when dealing with MRSA.

What should I do if I suspect my animal has MRSA?

Contact your veterinarian if your animal has one of the symptoms previously mentioned or any other symptom of infection. Your veterinarian can do a culture and susceptibility testing to determine if your animal has MRSA and treat the animal with the appropriate antibiotic.

What are the symptoms in humans?

MRSA most commonly **causes skin or tissue infections**, such as boils or abscesses. It may look like a “spider bite.”