

## **MRSA - Patient information**

One of your tests shows the presence of bacteria called meticillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA). Infections with MRSA may require special antibiotics. Therefore, while in hospital, there will be special measures around you to avoid spreading of MRSA to other patients. We hope this information will give you an understanding of why we have such measures.

### **What is MRSA?**

MRSA is *Staphylococcus aureus* resistant to several kinds of antibiotics. *Staphylococcus aureus* are bacteria often seen on our skin or in our nose. Usually they are not noticeable, but sometimes they can lead to infections, normally on the skin or in wounds.

### **Is MRSA dangerous?**

Infections caused by MRSA are not necessarily more dangerous than infections with ordinary *Staphylococcus aureus*, but require treatment with special kinds of antibiotics. As infections with MRSA can be hard to treat, we do not want spreading in hospitals.

### **How did you get MRSA?**

That is hard to say, but we know that hospital admission outside the Nordic countries, or long-term use of antibiotics are risk factors. The bacteria spread primarily by direct contact between humans. They can also spread indirectly by contact with door knobs, light switches, textiles and other points of contact.

### **Can MRSA be treated?**

Being a MRSA carrier usually doesn't give any disease. If you get an MRSA infection, we have to take that into consideration and adjust the antibiotic treatment. MRSA can in some cases disappear spontaneously. If not, a decolonization treatment can be applied to try to eliminate the bacteria. Such treatment must be considered by your doctor in agreement with you.

### **What does healthcare personnel do to avoid spreading of MRSA?**

If MRSA is suspected or confirmed, you will be isolated in a separate room in hospital to avoid MRSA spreading to other patients. The healthcare personnel will use protective equipment like gloves, a yellow coat and mask. It is important that everyone applies hand hygiene when entering and leaving your room. Retirement homes have their own routines for MRSA. Healthcare personnel will inform you and your visitors of the necessary protective measures.

### **What to do when you get home?**

- Good hand hygiene using hand sanitizer or washing hands with soap and water are the most important measures to avoid spreading of the bacteria. You can otherwise live and work as normal.

- You can discuss the possibilities for decolonization treatment of MRSA carriage with your doctor. We especially recommend this if you or someone in your household work in healthcare service, or have underlying disease with frequent contact with the healthcare system.
- Children that are carriers of MRSA can go to kinder garden and to school as usual, and there is no need to inform school or kinder garden about it.
- Inform about MRSA carriage whenever contacting dentist or health care service. Then preventive measures can be taken to avoid spreading.