

MRSA screening and suppression therapy

What is MRSA?

MRSA is a common germ that lives on the skin or in the nose. Many people have MRSA living harmlessly on their body without experiencing any symptoms or it making them ill. This is known as colonisation.

Why is MRSA a problem in hospitals?

Although MRSA usually lives harmlessly on the skin, if it enters the body through a wound, tube or drip it can cause infections.

Why are you screening patients for MRSA?

By finding out if you have MRSA living on your skin or in your nose before you come into hospital, we can do all we can to prevent it becoming an infection.

What is MRSA screening and when will it be done?

Screening involves taking two painless swabs, one from inside your nose and one from your groin. These are the areas of the body where the MRSA is most likely to be found. The swabs are generally taken by a nurse but if you wish to and are able you can do your own swab. The swabs will be sent to the hospital laboratory to see if MRSA is present - it can take up to five days to get the results.

What happens if I am colonised with MRSA?

If your swab results show that you have MRSA living on your skin or in your nose this does not mean that you have an MRSA infection. You will be asked to use an antiseptic (Chlorhexidine) body wash and an antibacterial (Octenisan®) nasal gel which can help to suppress or in some cases get rid of MRSA from the skin or nose. You will be asked to collect these from your GP.

You need to use the body wash and nose ointment for the four days before your admission date and continue to use them once you have been admitted to hospital.

What are the risks of treatment with Chlorhexidine and Octenisan®?

Most people do not experience problems. If any problems develop you should stop using the treatment immediately and tell your doctor or nurse. Information given in this leaflet should be read with the patient information leaflets provided by the manufacturers.

What are the benefits of treatment with Chlorhexidine and Octenisan®?

Using Chlorhexidine and Octenisan® can help to eliminate MRSA from your nose or skin and can reduce the risk of infection, both for you and for other patients in the hospital.

How should I use Octenisan® nasal gel?

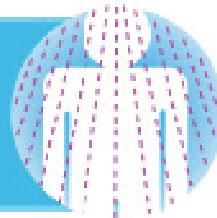
- This should be used as a five day course of treatment.
- Use twice a day.
- Before use you should wash your hands well.
- Squeeze a small amount, about the size of a match head, onto your little finger or a cotton bud and apply it to the inside of one nostril then repeat this for the other nostril.
- Close the nostrils by pressing the sides together for a moment, which spreads the nasal gel inside each nostril.
- Wash your hands with soap and water after use.

How do I use the Chlorhexidine body wash?



1. Wet your face and body. Then using undiluted Chlorhexidine wash your face (especially around the nose), armpits, anal and genital areas – but don't use inside the body.

2. After washing all these important areas, rinse off under the shower.



3. Repeat step 1 starting with the hair and always working downwards.

4. Repeat step 2.



5. After a final rinse dry yourself thoroughly and put on clean clothes.

Who should I contact if I have any questions?

If you need more information about MRSA screening ask our nurse, doctor, GP or pharmacist. Further information is available in the hospital's MRSA patient information leaflet which can be found on the website at www.bsuh.nhs.uk/hospitals/infection-control/pa-tient-information-leaflets/