



INFORMATION ON MRSA – AN ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANT INFECTION

The Davenport Community Schools are committed to providing a safe learning environment for our students and we encourage families to be informed about potential health risks. Although not a significant health concern in our community, the much-publicized increase in MRSA-related incidents among younger people across the country and a small number of confirmed cases within our district underscores the importance of raising awareness and preventing possible infection among our students and families.

Please read through the following information about MRSA and discuss the positive steps individuals and families can take to minimize their risk of infection. Your family physician can be a good resource for you if you have questions, and our school nurses are also available to provide information.

MRSA stands for methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus, a form of staph infection that does not respond to routine treatment with some commonly used antibiotics.

About MRSA

What is community-associated MRSA?

This is a MRSA infection that does not come from a hospital or nursing home. It usually originates with skin infections such as pimples or boils. These may need to be treated with carefully chosen antibiotics since it is possible for MRSA to cause blood, bone and lung infections. The overwhelming number of MRSA infections has been in the skin and soft tissue; although serious, these infections are not life-threatening. These skin infections can be treated. That is why it is important to seek medical attention early. Please note that the Scott County Health Department has established guidelines that as long as an infected individual is undergoing appropriate treatment and that the wound is properly covered, students do not need to be excluded from school.

Who is most at risk?

People in hospitals and nursing homes, or in conditions where skin touches skin through cuts and scrapes, and in crowded living conditions.

How is MRSA spread?

The infection looks like a spider bite, red, swollen and painful, and it may drain fluids. Those who think they have a skin infection should see a health-care provider to determine whether it is MRSA.

How can I keep MRSA from spreading?

- Keep wounds that are draining clean and covered in bandages.
- Clean hands regularly with soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand gel if they are not visibly soiled. Immediately clean hands after touching a wound or infected skin.
- Bathe regularly.
- Do not share items that come in contact with wounds. That includes towels, clothing, bedding, bar soap, razors and athletic equipment that touches the skin.
- Wash clothing that has come in contact with wounds and dry thoroughly.
- Do not join in activities where you will have skin-to-skin contact if you are not able to keep the wound covered.
- Wash equipment and environmental surfaces where multiple persons have contact with a suitable over-the-counter cleaner that specifies “Staphylococcus aureus” on the product label.

The Davenport Community Schools and the Scott County Health Department are working closely together to provide information and support to school nurses and other school staff regarding appropriate prevention, identification and treatment of skin wounds. The school district has a maintenance program in place to ensure that all necessary cleaning is done to provide a safe, supportive learning environment – including the use of products and cleaning procedures that significantly minimize the risk of MRSA transmission.

For more information, please contact the Scott County Health Department at 326-8616 or your family physician.

Here is a link to the Iowa Department of Public Health website as well:

<http://www.idph.state.ia.us/search/search.aspx?q=MRSA>

We appreciate your support and cooperation.