

### What if I have had MRSA before?

If you have a history of MRSA you may be given special antibiotics. This will be decided by doctors and depends on the type of operation or procedure you are having.

### Can I still have visitors?

Yes. You can still have visitors, including children and pregnant women. You are no risk to them. But always check the rules on visiting with your nurse. Visitors should always wash their hands and use the alcohol hand rubs when visiting anyone in hospital. They should do this when they enter or leave a patient's room or other areas of the hospital.



### What will happen after I leave hospital?

Once you are at home, you can carry on as normal.

Your GP will be informed of the fact that you have been treated for MRSA. They will discuss with you any necessary follow-up and may take further swabs to see if the MRSA has been fully removed.

Remember, if you are worried about MRSA talk to your local NHS clinic nurse, your GP or Practice Nurse, or look on the [NHS Choices website www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) where you can find out more about MRSA.

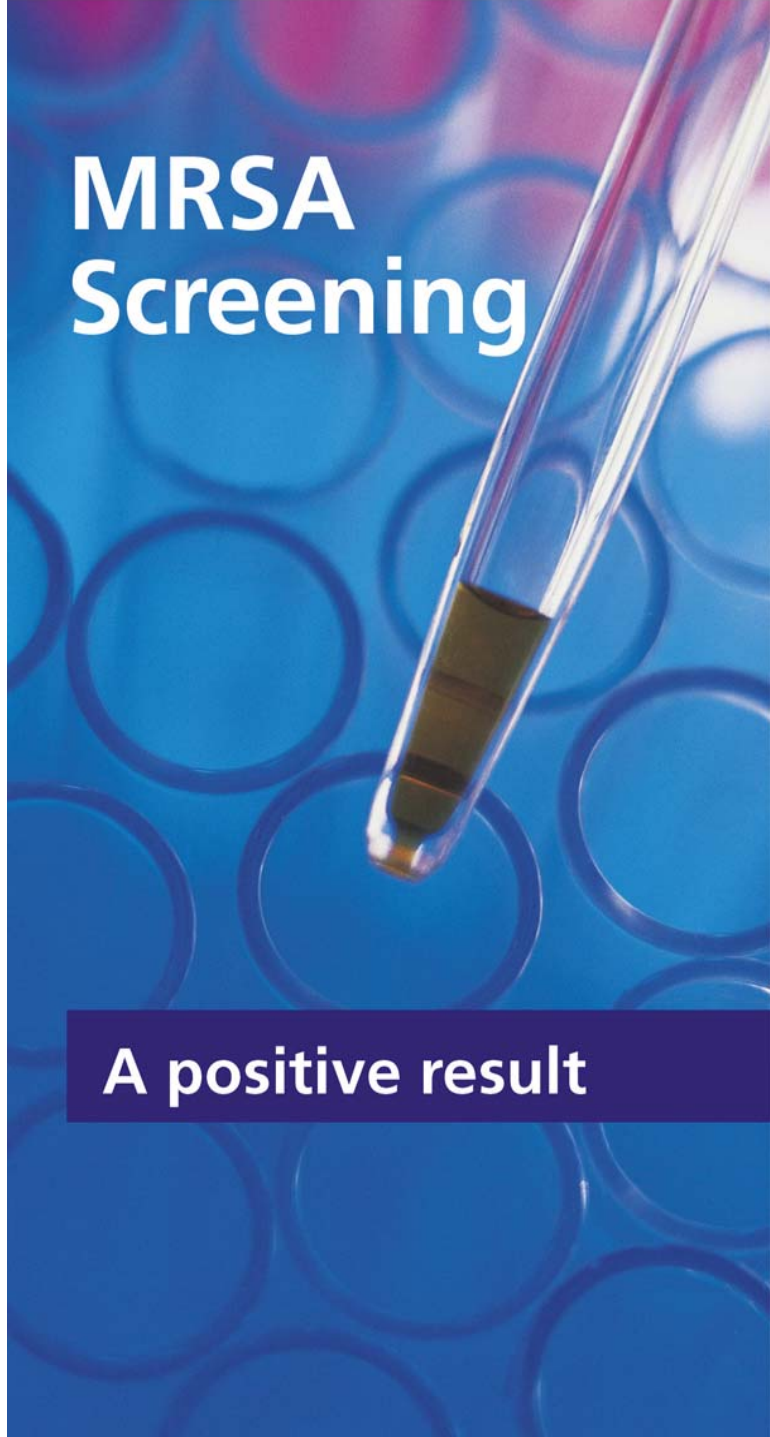
### Did you know?

MRSA has been around for many years, it was first identified in the 1960s.

### Did you know?

In England, MRSA infection rates in hospitals are falling. Compared to four years ago\*, the number of MRSA infections has more than halved.

\* Between 2003/4 and 2007/8 MRSA bloodstream infections across England fell by 57%



## What is MRSA?

MRSA is a type of bacteria (germ). It stands for Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus. It is a type of bacteria that has become resistant to a group of antibiotics called Meticillin. But doctors can still treat MRSA with other sorts of antibiotics.

## I've been told I carry MRSA, what does this mean?

Do not worry. Many people carry MRSA on their skin or in their nose. It does not make them ill and they are not a risk to healthy people. This includes older people, pregnant women, children and babies. We all carry lots of bacteria and usually it doesn't cause a problem. But when a person goes in to hospital carrying MRSA and has a procedure that involves breaking the skin, then the MRSA can get in to the body and may cause an infection.

If we find out you are carrying MRSA before you go into hospital we can use a simple treatment to get rid of as much of it as possible. This means the chances of you getting an MRSA infection, or passing MRSA on to another patient, are much smaller.

You will be contacted by the hospital or your GP, who will let you know what you need to do next. They will explain more about the treatment and how to get it.

If you are carrying MRSA on your skin you may not be able to have your planned operation or procedure straight away. You may need to be treated first to protect you, and other patients, from getting ill.

## What is an MRSA infection?

When MRSA causes an infection, this means that the MRSA bacteria are causing the person to be ill. The MRSA will have got into a person's body and they are said to be infected with MRSA. It can be a mild infection causing redness and swelling at a wound site. But it can also cause more serious chest or blood infections. If a patient has an infection caused by MRSA then antibiotics, other than Meticillin, are used.



## What is the treatment used to get rid of MRSA from my skin?

Your doctor or nurse will discuss the treatment with you. It usually involves using an antibacterial wash or powder and using a special cream in your nose.

You may be asked to change your clothes, sheets and pillowcases every day, usually for 5 days.

You do not need to be in hospital whilst you are using the treatment. You should continue until the day of your operation or procedure or until the 5 days is complete. You should not usually need to be screened again before you come in to hospital.

## What if my operation is urgent?

If your operation is urgent and you need to go into hospital quickly then you may be started on the treatment as soon as possible and might be admitted to a side room in the hospital.

## Are there any side effects of the treatment?

The treatment has few side effects and generally any side effects will be mild, such as skin irritation. If you develop a rash, stop treatment and ask your clinic or doctor for advice.