

## MRSA

A Staph infection is a contagious skin infection that is caused by *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria. Staph is a common germ that many people carry in their nasal passages, under their fingernails or on their skin with no ill effects. MRSA is a type of Staph that has developed antibiotic resistance (certain antibiotics are unable to kill the bacteria). Since Staph is spread primarily by direct (skin-to-skin) human contact or with direct contact to wound drainage of someone who is carrying or infected with the bacteria, anyone with a break in his or her skin is at risk. MRSA may also occur less frequently through indirect contact with contaminated surfaces or items. MRSA is not spread through the air.

Staph infections begin abruptly. Symptoms may include a large area of redness on the skin, swelling and pain, followed by a pustule or abscess or boils and carbuncles (red, lumpy sores filled with pus). If left untreated, Staph can infect blood and bones, causing severe illness that requires hospitalization.

Below are links to the Department of State Health Services that include guidelines and procedures for the prevention and spread of MRSA.

[http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/health/antibiotic\\_resistance/educational/whatyouneedtoknowstaph.pdf](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/health/antibiotic_resistance/educational/whatyouneedtoknowstaph.pdf)

[http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/health/antibiotic\\_resistance/educational/TakeCareSkinInfection.pdf](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/health/antibiotic_resistance/educational/TakeCareSkinInfection.pdf)