

## **MRSA** **(Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus)**

### **MRSA found in the community**

- Most often causes skin infections
- Usually will appear as pustules or boils (often red, swollen, and painful). May have pus or other drainage.
- Early stages resemble a pimple, spider bite or boil.
- Commonly occur at sites of visible skin trauma (e.g., cuts, abrasions, and areas of the body covered by hair, face, neck, groin, armpits, back of legs).
- Skin infections can be effectively treated by drainage of pus.
- Antibiotics may or may not be used.
- More serious infections are very rare in healthy people who get MRSA skin infections (e.g., pneumonia, bloodstream infections, or bone infections).

### **How is MRSA transmitted?**

Direct skin-to-skin contact with shared items or surfaces that have come into contact with someone else's infection (e.g., towels, used bandages).

### **In what settings do MRSA skin infections occur?**

- MRSA infections can occur anywhere
- Some settings have factors that make it easier for MRSA to be transmitted
- The factors referred to as the **5 C's** are as follows:
  - *Crowding*
  - Frequent skin-to-skin *Contact*
  - *Compromised* skin (i.e., cuts or abrasions)
  - *Contaminated* items and surfaces
  - Lack of *Cleanliness*
- Common locations where the 5 C's are found include:
  - Schools
  - Dormitories
  - Military barracks
  - Households
  - Correctional facilities
  - Daycare centers

### **How do I protect myself from getting MRSA?**

- Practice good hygiene (e.g., washing hands with soap and water, using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and showering immediately after participating in exercise).
- Covering skin trauma such as abrasions or cuts with a clean dry bandage until healed.
- Avoiding sharing items (e.g., towels, razors) that come into contact with your bare skin; and using a barrier such as a piece of clothing or a towel between your skin and shared equipment such as weight lifting benches.
- Maintain a clean environment by establishing cleaning procedures for frequently touched surfaces and surfaces that come into contact with people's skin.

Contact your physician if you have any questions or problems.