



Northumbria Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

MSSA (Meticillin Sensitive Staphylococcus Aureus)

**MSSA screening for patients admitted to
orthopaedic trauma ward**

Issued by service improvement & surgical surveillance team

Northumbria Healthcare endeavour to reduce the risk of patients developing a post-operative infection. You have been admitted to the orthopaedic trauma ward and we would like to screen you for MSSA.

What is MSSA?

You may have heard of MRSA (Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus) which is often in the news and for which you will also be offered screening. MSSA stands for Meticillin Sensitive Staphylococcus Aureus. This bacteria (germ) is carried in the nostrils of around 20% (1 in 5) of the population. For the majority of people this causes no problems however when the skin is cut, for example during an operation, the bacteria can enter the wound and cause an infection.

What are the benefits of screening for MSSA?

As part of our proactive approach to preventing surgical site infections we screen our patients for MSSA when admitted to the trauma ward even when the patient does not undergo a surgical procedure. In most cases this will eliminate the bacteria from the patient's nose and skin protecting the patients that are undergoing a surgical procedure. This has been shown to help reduce the number of post-operative infections dramatically.

How will I know if I have MSSA?

When you are admitted, either via the emergency care unit or to the trauma ward we will take a swab from your nose and groin to send to the laboratory to be examined. The laboratory will look for both MRSA and MSSA on these swabs. The results are usually available in three to four days. We will start the eradication treatment before the results are known as a proactive and preventive measure. The treatment consists of an antimicrobial body and hair wash and nasal ointment.

How will MSSA affect me?

Having MSSA will not affect the timing of your surgery or where you are nursed in the hospital. You will have no restrictions on visitors and will not be nursed in a side-room (isolated) based on the result of your MSSA test.

What happens next?

If you test positive for MSSA you will continue to receive the eradication treatment as instructed for the number of days by the clinical staff looking after you and if your result is negative the treatment will be stopped.

How to reduce the spread of MSSA in the hospital

As patients are at their most vulnerable when in hospital it is important that strict hygiene practices are followed. To remain proactive and reduce the risk to our patients who maybe undergoing surgery it is therefore important that both staff and visitors either use hand gel or wash their hands before and after they attend to you. No one should be offended if you ask them to do so.

Contacts

If you require any further information please speak to a member of the ward team or if discharged home and you still have some questions please contact the surgical helpline on:

01670 529431

Monday to Friday
8.30am to 3.30pm

Alternative Formats

If you would like a copy of this information in large print, another language, audio tape or other format please call the Contact Centre on **03 44 811 8118**

Other sources of information

NHS 111

NHS Choices

www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx

NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)

www.nice.org.uk

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Freephone: **0800 032 0202**

Text: 01670 511098

Email: northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk

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General Enquiries **03 44 811 8111**

www.northumbria.nhs.uk

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