

As part of the VA's effort to help staff and veterans win this battle we will:

- Place patients with **MRSA** in a private room or with other patients who have the same germ.
- Post a sign outside of the room where **MRSA** patients are housed to remind every person going into the room about how to prevent these germs from spreading.
- Teach veterans and the VA community how to stop the spread of these resistant germs.
- Test patients for the **MRSA** germ.



You will see VA health care workers:

- Wash their hands or use hand cleaner before and after caring for every patient.
- Wear gloves and gowns when caring for patients with **MRSA**.



It's okay to ask health care providers if they have cleaned their hands.

**Keep veterans healthy!
Defeat the germs!
Win the battle!**

Stop **MRSA** and other germs. Together we can make our facilities safer for patients, visitors, and staff.

For more information, contact:

MRSA: Join the Battle to Prevent Infection - July, 2007

MRSA

Methicillin-Resistant
Staphylococcus aureus

Join the Battle to Prevent Infection



**Infection Prevention:
It's in your hands**



Department of
Veterans Affairs



Join the Battle to Prevent Infection: Wash Your Hands!

Germs live on people and the things they touch. Germs are all around us – at home, in the community and hospitals. Some germs are not killed by common antibiotics. We call them “resistant” germs because when they cause infections, the infections are very hard to treat. Common antibiotics cannot kill these resistant germs. **MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus)** is a resistant germ.

People with **MRSA** can spread these germs if they do not wash/clean their hands.

People spread germs to each other when they:

- Shake hands or touch another person with unwashed/uncleaned hands.
- Touch an item that someone with **MRSA** has touched with unwashed/uncleaned hands.

MRSA can:

- Be carried by people who look healthy and have no outward symptoms of infection.
- Spread from person to person on the hands.
- Be carried by people who do not know they have **MRSA**.
- Infect anyone.
- Be very difficult to treat with usual drugs (antibiotics).
- Make sick veterans even sicker.

In fact, hand washing/cleaning is the very best way to stop the spread of germs from person to person.

To prevent infections, we need your help!

Our battle plan to prevent the germs from spreading and causing infection is simple, yet effective:

Wash/Clean Your Hands ***There are two ways to wash/clean your hands:***

1. Wash with soap and water when your hands look or feel dirty:

- Make lather with soap and warm water.
- Rub palms, back of hands, and between fingers.
- Rub for at least 15 seconds.
- Rinse and dry well.



2. Use the hand cleaner with alcohol when your hands do not look or feel dirty:

- Follow directions on the cleaner for the amount of cleaner to use and how long to rub. Use enough hand cleaner to cover both sides of your hands. Ask the hospital staff for help if you do not understand the directions.
- Rub the cleaner on the palms, back of hands, and between fingers. Keep rubbing until your hands are dry.



Not sure what to use?
Wash with soap and water

