



NORTH  
YARMOUTH  
ACADEMY

## Guidelines to Prevent Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)

### Background information:

from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (CDC)

[http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar\\_mrsa\\_ca\\_public.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar_mrsa_ca_public.html)

[http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/disease%20specific/MRSA\\_FactSheet\\_sports%20teams.8.28.07.doc](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/disease%20specific/MRSA_FactSheet_sports%20teams.8.28.07.doc)

### *What is Staphylococcus aureus (staph)?*

Staphylococcus aureus, often referred to simply as "staph," are bacteria commonly carried on the skin or in the nose of healthy people. Approximately 25% to 30% of the population is colonized (when bacteria are present, but not causing an infection) in the nose with staph bacteria. Sometimes, staph can cause an infection. Staph bacteria are one of the most common causes of skin infections in the United States. Most of these skin infections are minor (such as pimples and boils) and can be treated without antibiotics (also known as antimicrobials or antibacterials). However, staph bacteria also can cause serious infections (such as surgical wound infections, bloodstream infections, and pneumonia).

### *What is MRSA (methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus)?*

Some staph bacteria are resistant to antibiotics. MRSA is a type of staph that is resistant to antibiotics called beta-lactams. Beta-lactam antibiotics include methicillin and other more common antibiotics such as oxacillin, penicillin and amoxicillin. While 25% to 30% of the population is colonized with staph, approximately 1% is colonized with MRSA.

### *Who gets staph or MRSA infections?*

Staph infections, including MRSA, occur most frequently among persons in hospitals and healthcare facilities (such as nursing homes and dialysis centers) who have weakened immune systems. These healthcare-associated staph infections include surgical wound infections, urinary tract infections, bloodstream infections, and pneumonia.

### *What is community-associated MRSA (CA-MRSA)?*

Staph and MRSA can also cause illness in persons outside of hospitals and healthcare facilities. MRSA infections that are acquired by persons who **have not** been recently (within the past year) hospitalized or had a medical procedure (such as dialysis, surgery, catheters) are known as CA-MRSA infections. Staph or MRSA infections in the community are usually manifested as skin infections, such as pimples and boils, and occur in otherwise healthy people.

### *How is MRSA spread?*

MRSA is spread from person to person, mostly by direct skin-to-skin contact.

People can also get MRSA when their skin comes into contact with items that have been contaminated by bacteria from wounds in people with a MRSA infection. This could happen by sharing towels or clothing/personal equipment or when exercise mats, weights, etc..., are not cleaned off after use.

## Measures for Prevention of MRSA

**General Prevention Measures:** Instruct and encourage members of the NYA community in basic guidelines. School Nurse and/or designee will provide teachers, faculty, coaches, students and parents with written guidelines and/or verbal instructions. The guidelines focus on athletes but are pertinent to all individuals at NYA. The guidelines are based on information from the CDC and Maine CDC websites – hereafter referred to only as the CDC: For further information link to these websites:

[http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar\\_mrsa\\_ca\\_public.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar_mrsa_ca_public.html)

[http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar\\_mrsa\\_in\\_schools.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar_mrsa_in_schools.html)

[http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/disease\\_methicillin-resistant.htm](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/disease_methicillin-resistant.htm)

**Environmental Cleaning:** NYA will meet recommended cleaning guidelines by the CDC of all areas where there is routine skin to skin contact and/or of items that may come in contact with infected skin. Cleaning solutions can be the CDC recommended daily mixed solution or a commercial solution that is identified to be effective in eliminating MRSA. Solution used is determined by maintenance and solution information is available in the maintenance department (MSDS manual). Areas for cleaning include but are not limited to:

- Bathrooms in all buildings daily by NYA employees.
- Locker rooms in the gym and Travis Roy Arena (TRA) daily by NYA employees.
- Equipment in cardio and weight room equipment, located in TRA, by individuals/team after use. NYA provides spray bottles with cleaning solution and paper/cloth towels. Athletes and others using these areas will be instructed they are required to clean equipment after each use.

### Responsibility of Individuals:

#### **Hand washing is the single most important behavior in preventing the spread of infectious disease**

- Keep hands clean by washing them frequently with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer gel (not provided by NYA), if hands are not badly soiled.
- Shower with soap and water as soon as possible after direct contact sports, and use a clean, dry towel each time.
- Do not share towels (even on the sidelines at a game), soap, razors, pads, or other personal care items.
- Daily, all persons are responsible to bring home used/worn athletic clothing, towels and other items for laundry/cleaning. It is recommended that these items be placed in a plastic bag/container for transporting. Protective gear should be washed weekly, as directed by maker.
- All persons are expected to leave locker rooms in a condition so that cleaning can be done: no items are left on the floor or on benches.
- Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered with a bandage until healed.
- Avoid contact with other people's wounds or bandages.
- If open wounds, scrapes, or scratches are present, avoid whirlpools or common hot tubs.
- Persons should immediately inform school nurse, coach and/or health care provider if they think they have a skin infection of concern.

**Action steps for suspected and/or diagnosed case of MRSA:**

- School nurse or health care provider will assess any skin alterations of concern. The school nurse may request further evaluation by a physician.
- Those infected with MRSA or other staph infections should follow their health care provider's treatment plan, including completing antibiotic therapy, if an antibiotic was prescribed.
- If diagnosed with MRSA, a student may return to school population and/or athletics with a signed note from their health care provider.
- On return to school/athletics, any skin areas that are draining must be covered with a dressing that contains any drainage.
- The NYA community will be notified by the school nurse and/or designee of a diagnosed case of MRSA, without identifying the person(s) by name. The school nurse and/or designee will consult with the state epidemiologist as to what further measures might be needed, and whether to report the case to ME CDC.
- If there are multiple cases of MRSA, more restrictive measures may be recommended by public health officials.
- Students/athletes who have regular contact with infected person(s) will be instructed in signs and symptoms of infection, and are to notify the school nurse and/or health care provider if they have skin areas of concern. If someone is seeing a health care provider, it is important to inform them if there is a diagnosis of MRSA within the school.

January 2008