

## **Community-Associated Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus**



Holdrege Public Schools has had no reported cases of Staph infections. We are taking precautionary measures to ensure this does not happen. Local physicians have talked with HMS and HHS students and staff about these infections. Additionally, coaches and custodial staff are educated on the prevention of Staph infections. Maintaining a healthy safe school environment is a priority for HPS.

Staphylococcus aureus is bacteria (germ) normally found on the skin, which usually never causes a problem. This germ can cause mild to severe infections of the skin, lungs, bones, and blood, if it becomes displaced or overgrows. In the past, staph infections have been easily treated with antibiotic therapy; however, there is a new strain being seen that is resistant to many antibiotics. The name of this bug is Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA). There are two types of this bacteria, healthcare acquired and community acquired. Community-associated MRSA is what affects people who are not in a hospital setting.

Anyone can get sick with MRSA. However, there are risk factors that make people more likely to develop this infection. Being very young or very old, having a serious illness, playing contact sports, sharing towels, personal items, or athletic equipment, and living or having close contact with someone who is infected are some of the risk factors.

MRSA infections can start as small red bumps on the skin and may look like pimples or spider bites, they then, quickly turn into severe abscesses (pus-filled areas of infection). MRSA can also start in other ways and spread deeper into the body. However, the infections involving the skin are showing up more often among the healthy people and are affecting students and athletes.

MRSA infections are usually treated with powerful antibiotics. Preventing a Staph infection is the best treatment. Here are some helpful tips on preventing these infections:

- **WASH HANDS** thoroughly and often with soap and water
- Keep cuts and abrasions clean and covered with a bandage until healed.
- Avoid contact with other people's wounds or material contaminated by wounds.
- **DO NOT SHARE** items such as razors, soap, ointments/balms, towels/wash cloths, clothing, or uniforms.
- If participating in contact sports, cover all cuts, scrapes, and other wounds with a bandage
- Shower with soap immediately after each practice or game. Wash clothing frequently and wipe all non-washable equipment (head protectors, helmets, etc.) with alcohol or antibiotic solution after each person uses it.
- See a physician promptly if you have a suspicious skin sore or rash.

For additional information from the Center of Disease Control, please visit this website:

<http://www.cdc.gov/Features/MRSAinSchools/>