

1. Key points

Community-associated methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (CA-MRSA) is a **bacterium** that is routinely found on the skin (colonisation). It can sometimes cause a skin infection or a wound, and in rare cases more serious infections such as pneumonia or septicaemia.

CA-MRSA is resistant to several classes of antibiotics, which means that it is not killed by the usual antibiotics. CA-MRSA is **aggressive and infects people who are in good health especially**. Hence, people are infected primarily outside of a hospital setting, in the *community* (CA-MRSA).

2. Effective antibiotic treatment

If infected by CA-MRSA, you may have to take antibiotics specially aimed at this resistant bacterium. This treatment will be prescribed by the doctor.

- **Oral antibiotics**
 - Comply exactly with the number of doses prescribed by the doctor.
- **In case of local treatment of a skin infection (on a wound, a boil, etc.)**
 - Comply with the prescribed doses and application methods
 - Do not touch the site of the infection without having washed your hands
 - Disinfect your hands after having touched the wound, the boil, etc.
 - Never pierce or scratch an infection site; you risk making the situation worse
 - If necessary, disinfect the wound with 70% alcohol or another antiseptic
 - If the dressing becomes unstuck or wet, change it promptly.

It is recommended that you do not touch the wound between visits to the doctor.

3. Disinfection of the skin

This is what is referred to as “decolonisation”. The goal is to eliminate the bacteria remaining on the skin or in the nose, even after the infection has healed. This decolonisation will be prescribed by the doctor.

- Shower with a disinfectant soap (for example Hibiscrub® or Betadine®) every day, for at least 10 consecutive days.
- Use the soap on the entire body and hair, focusing on the armpits and the groin area.
- Apply the nasal antibiotic ointment Bactroban® inside each nostril twice a day for the same 10 consecutive days.

4. Hygiene measures

*These hygiene measures complement the treatment and decolonisation of CA-MRSA. They help to **avoid re-colonisation or infection by CA-MRSA**:*

- Disinfecting one's hands with a disinfectant solution (Sterilium®, Hopirub®, Soft-man® or Avitracid®, for example) is the most important hygiene measure. One has to disinfect one's hands before eating, after going to the toilet, and of course after touching the wound.
- Towels, face cloths, sheets and clothes should be changed as often as possible. They should never be shared or exchanged, even between family members.
- Each family member should have their own tube of nasal antibiotic ointment and their own hygiene products.
- Nails should be kept short.
- The home should be cleaned regularly. It is recommended that a disinfectant product (bleach) should be used to clean the bathroom and toilets.
- For children and adolescents, going to school is permitted if the wounds are covered with a dry and clean dressing.
- Adults exercising a professional activity may continue to work. However, wounds should be covered with a dry and clean dressing.
- The family member responsible for applying dressings should wear disposable gloves and should disinfect their hands with a disinfectant solution (Sterilium®, Hopirub®) when they have finished.

5. Follow-up testing of people close to you

*Testing for CA-MRSA and/or decolonisation of people close to you (in general your family, but in certain situations, other people as well) helps to **avoid new colonisations or infections within the same household**. It will be prescribed by the doctor.*

- Testing for CA-MRSA in the nose and the folds of the groin may be performed among your family and people close to you.
- A skin disinfection treatment for the entire family is often necessary for optimal decolonisation and should be performed at the same time for the whole family.
- One month after the end of the treatment, testing may be proposed to check that members of your family unit or relatives no longer have CA-MRSA on their skin or in their nose.