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## Personal Prevention of MRSA Skin Infections

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Protect yourself through good hygiene.

The key to preventing MRSA infections is for everyone to practice good hygiene:

1. Keep your hands clean by washing thoroughly with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand rub.
2. Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered with a bandage until healed.
3. Avoid contact with other people's wounds or bandages.
4. Avoid sharing personal items such as towels or razors.

Prevent the spread of MRSA if you have it.

Prevent spreading MRSA skin infections to others by following these steps:

1. **Cover your wound.**  
Keep wounds that are draining, or have pus, covered with clean, dry bandages until healed. Follow your healthcare provider's instructions on proper care of the wound. Pus from infected wounds can contain staph, including MRSA, so keeping the infection covered will help prevent the spread to others. Bandages and tape can be discarded with the regular trash.
2. **Clean your hands.**  
You, your family, and others in close contact should wash their hands frequently with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub, especially after changing the bandage or touching the infected wound.
3. **Do not share personal items.**  
Avoid sharing personal items, such as towels, washcloths, razors, clothing, or uniforms, that may have had contact with the infected wound or bandage. Wash sheets, towels, and clothes that become soiled with water and laundry detergent. Use a dryer to dry clothes completely.
4. **Maintain a clean environment**  
Establish cleaning procedures for frequently touched surfaces and surfaces that come into direct contact with your skin.
5. **Talk to your doctor.**  
Tell any healthcare providers who treat you that you have or had a staph or MRSA skin infection. There are things that can be done to protect people that carry staph/MRSA from getting an infection or spreading it to others when they are in the hospital or have surgery.

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