



Lexington-Fayette County Health Department

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Health department provides tips to prevent spread of MRSA

The Lexington-Fayette County Health Department has received reports of MRSA in the community and wants to provide tips to help people prevent its spread.

MRSA, which is short for *Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus*, is resistant to a number of antibiotics. Staph infections, including MRSA, are most commonly found among people in healthcare facilities who have weakened immune systems. However, these infections are becoming more common in people who haven't had contact with a healthcare facility. Staph and MRSA commonly cause skin infections such as boils and abscesses that may resemble a spider bite; however, MRSA can cause more serious infections such as pneumonia or blood infections. MRSA skin infections can be treated, but they may be difficult to cure. Prompt recognition and treatment is important.

MRSA is spread through skin-to-skin contact (usually by hands) and contacting contaminated surfaces. The risk is highest for people who: (1) have close contact with individuals with open wounds; (2) have poor hygiene; or (3) associate with others in close quarters.

The following steps can help prevent the spread of MRSA:

- Wash your hands. Use warm, soapy water, and if that's not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Shower immediately after exercising. Keeping clean and practicing good hygiene can help stop the spread of MRSA.
- Don't share items such as clothing, towels, razors, bars of soap or other personal items. Don't share sports equipment. Again, practicing good hygiene is essential here.
- If you have a cut or wound, be sure to keep it covered with a clean, dry bandage until it has healed.
- Regularly clean frequently touched surfaces and surfaces that come into direct contact with people's skin. Use rubbing alcohol or a diluted bleach solution. Mix one tablespoon of bleach into a quart of water. The solution must be in contact with a surface for a minimum of two minutes for effective disinfection.

For additional information, visit www.lexingtonhealthdepartment.org or call 231-9791. You can also find the Lexington-Fayette County Health Department on Facebook, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/LFCHD.

PREVENT

PROMOTE

PROTECT