Screening for MRSA
Information for patients

What this leaflet tells you
Before your operation or treatment at The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust you have been screened for MRSA. This leaflet informs you of the screening policy for the Trust for MRSA and the next steps if you are found to have a positive result. To read more about MRSA please see the separate information leaflet.

Q. Why have I been screened?
You have been screened for MRSA as part of the Trusts MRSA screening policy. Following recently updated guidance from the Department of Health the MRSA screening has been extended to include day case admissions and caesarean sections.

Q Are there any patients who do not need to be screened?
The Department of Health have given guidelines for certain specialities that do not require screening. These groups include:
- Endoscopy
- Dental
- Paediatric patients
- Minor Dermatology procedures (wart removal)

Q What does MRSA screening involves?
Screening for MRSA is a simple procedure that is painless. Swabs are taken from your nostrils, armpits (axilla) and groin area. One swab is used for both nostrils, one swab used for both axilla and one swab for both groin.

Q. What happens next?
If it is found that you are MRSA positive following the screening process, you will be contacted and advised of the treatment required.
Q. Where do I get this treatment?
Your GP will be notified of the positive result and will be asked to prescribe the treatment for you. The date of your admission and a date for you to commence using the treatment will be included in this letter to the GP.

Q. How will this affect me and my family?
MRSA can be passed from person to person by contact between them. Someone carrying the germ on their hands or skin can pass it onto another person if good basic hygiene is not followed. The easiest way to prevent cross infection is to follow good personal hygiene rules, in particular a good hand washing technique.

Q. What treatment will I require?
You will be asked to follow a 5 day antiseptic programme that tackles the MRSA bug living on your skin. When you come into hospital it will be harder for the bug to cause infection or spread to others. You must start the programme at least 5 days before your surgery, your GP and preadmission clinic will advise you on the day to start your treatment. The planned surgery should take place on day 6 or 7. If you do not have 7 days left before your operation or treatment, your admission to hospital may have to be delayed under certain circumstances.

If your operation is delayed you must start the programme again – 7 days before your new surgery or treatment date.

Q What will I be expected to do with the treatment?
The treatment involves washing your hair and skin with special soap, using a cream in the nose and changing all your clothes, sheets and pillowcases every day for 5 days. You do not need to stay in hospital during this period. MRSA cannot be cleared from open wounds so you need to cover these with a dressing. Your doctor will discuss this with you.

You should not need to be tested for MRSA again before your surgery unless it is delayed.
Q How can I remove MRSA before coming into hospital?
You will be prescribed a five day course of antiseptic skincare products that can be used to tackle the MRSA bugs. The products are:
- A body wash/shampoo containing an antiseptic called chlorhexidine. It is quite gentle on the skin and can be used by people with sensitive skin.
- An ointment for putting inside your nostrils. This contains an antibiotic called mupirocin.

Q How do I apply the treatment to my nose?
MRSA can be found inside the nose so you need to use Mupirocin nasal ointment. Place a small amount (about the size of a match stick head) on your little finger, and apply to the inside of your nose three times a day. You can also use a cotton wool bud if needed. Then, press the sides of the nose together – this will help to spread the ointment in the nose. This needs to be repeated three times a day for 5 days.

Q How do I apply the treatment to my skin?
You will need to wash all over your body everyday with Chlorhexidine skin cleanser for 5 days. It should be applied to the skin with a disposable cloth for your hands and rinsed off. If you are having a bath, do not add the Chlorhexidine to the bath water – this makes it too dilute to be effective. You should put the liquid directly onto the wet skin and use it in the same way as you would use soap. Begin with the face, and work downwards paying particular attention to the areas around the nose, armpits and groin. Do not use the same cloth or towel everyday, these needs to be changed daily.

Q. Do I have to wash my hair as well?
The wash you have used on your skin should also be used as a shampoo for 2 days during the 5 days of treatment, preferably on day 2 and 4. This should be put straight onto wet hair, like shampoo, and not diluted. After washing your hair in the Chlorhexidine you can then use your own shampoo and conditioner if required.

Q. Do I have to have clean bed linen?
Bed linen should be changed daily. You may need help from relatives to do this. The bed should be stripped and the items put into the washing machine before you have a bath or shower. The bed linen should be washed at 40°C in either your own washing machine or at the launderette and preferably tumble dried.
Q. What should I do with my clothing?
As with your bed linen, clothing should be changed daily.

Q. If I can’t take the treatment, will someone be able to do it for me?
If you have a disability or you cannot apply the treatment for any other reason, a healthcare worker may be able to assist you with this either at a clinic setting or in your own home. Please let your GP or the pre admission clinic know immediately if this may present a problem for you.

If you have any further questions in regard to the screening and treatment please contact the infection control team.
Languages/ Alternative Formats

Please ask if you require this information in other languages, large print or audio format. Please contact: 01895 279973

Fadlan waydii haddii aad warbixintan ku rabto luqad ama hab kale. Fadlan la xidhiidh 01895 279 973

各國語言/模式選擇
若你需要以下資料改為其他語言，大寫，或其他模式例如收音式或盲人字體的話，請電 01895 279973。