

# M R S A

You may have seen or heard some information about MRSA (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus) a type of staph bacteria that is resistant to certain antibiotics. Most of these infections outside of the hospital setting are skin infections. These usually appear as boils or pimples and are usually red, swollen and painful. They are commonly found at sites where the skin has been opened (cuts, abrasions) or areas of the body covered by hair. The main way this spreads is by hands and skin-to-skin contact along with poor hygiene. We are not aware of any cases at Avonworth at this time, although it would not be unusual for the school district to have a few at any given time. More specific information is available on the CDC and PADOH websites below.

<http://www.cdc.gov/mrsa/index.html>

<http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=514&objID=558022&mode=2>

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## **Personal Prevention of MRSA Skin Infections (from the CDC website)**

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.
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Good hygiene practices are especially important in athletes or anyone more prone to cuts and abrasions which allow bacteria to enter the body. It is a good idea for your child to shower after practice or games when they would have close contact with others.

Get prompt medical attention for any INFECTED wounds. Signs of infection are redness, pain, warmth and pus draining from the wound. Most infected wounds respond to antibiotics in the methicillin class.

In very few cases, a stronger antibiotic may be needed to clear the infection. Your physician will culture any suspicious wounds and prescribe the appropriate antibiotic.

MRSA only becomes dangerous if the wound is not treated in time and the infection spreads to body organs or blood.