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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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Public Health Coordinator

INFORMATION FOR SCHOOLS AND PARENTS

Is MRSA reportable?

Single cases of MRSA are not reportable, however, if there is a cluster (2 or more non-household cases) of MRSA infections within a school, the local health department should be contacted so they can determine if an outbreak might be occurring.

Should infected students/employees be excluded from school?

School should not be closed and classes should not be canceled. People who are infected are permitted to attend school/work as long as they are compliant with infection control measures. Skin infections should be kept clean and bandaged. Students who participate in contact sports may be excluded from participating if they cannot keep their wound properly bandaged. If there are multiple confirmed cases of MRSA infections among members of a particular sport, and the sport team shares common equipment, that sports team may be closed down temporarily. These recommendations should be made in consultation with the local health department.

Should we notify parents if a student has a MRSA infection?

NJDHSS does not recommend parent notification for isolated cases. However, if a particular school chooses to notify parents, please do so in coordination with your local health department. The local health department will review any letters for technical accuracy and can assist with phone inquiries from concerned parents.

What can schools do to prevent MRSA infections?

- Provide students/parents with information about MRSA and preventive behaviors.
- Encourage frequent handwashing by students and employees.
- Encourage proper personal hygiene among students and employees such as showering after sports activities, wearing clean clothing, etc.
- Discourage the sharing of personal items such as clothing, towels, bar soap, sports equipment, etc.
- Ensure proper cleaning of surfaces with EPA approved disinfectants known to kill bacteria. Most common over the counter disinfectants will be effective if they have an EPA registration number on the back and state they are effective in killing bacteria.
- Encourage staff and students to keep any wounds bandaged and to consult with their healthcare provider for evaluation of any suspicious skin lesions.

Should any special soap be used for handwashing?

Any kind of soap is fine for handwashing. It does not have to be antibacterial. Frequent handwashing is very important and the act of washing is more important than the type of soap.

Should special laundry detergent be used?

There is no need for special laundry detergent. Washing clothing in hot water with regular laundry detergent and drying in a hot air drier will kill the bacteria.

Should special disinfectants be used?

There is no need for special disinfectants. Use an EPA approved product and follow use instructions carefully. Most common over the counter disinfectants will be effective if they have an EPA registration number on the back and state they are effective in killing bacteria.