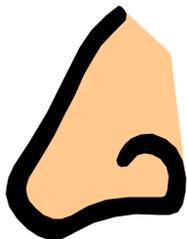


Amador County Unified School District Health Services, Amador County Public Health and Amador County Environmental Health have created an MRSA task force to address concerns and issues on Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) in the schools. The following information is intended to clarify questions on MRSA.

### What is Staphylococcus aureus?

Staphylococcus aureus (staph) are bacteria that many healthy people carry on their skin or in their nose. About 25% to 30% of people in the United States carry staph in their nose, but it does not make them sick. Staph can also be carried in the armpit, groin, rectum or genital area.



Most staph infections are minor and can be treated without antibiotics.

### What is MRSA?

Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) is a type of staph that is not killed by methicillin and similar antibiotics. About 1 out of every 100 people carries MRSA without making them sick. MRSA infections do not look any different than other skin infections.

### What do staph and MRSA infections look like?

Common skin conditions caused by staph and MRSA may look like any of the following:

- Sores that look and feel like spider bites (but are not spider bites)
- Red painful bumps under the skin called boils or abscesses
- A cut that is swollen, hot to touch and filled with pus
- Blisters filled with fluid or red skin with a honey-colored crust
- Red, warm, firm skin area that is painful and getting larger

### How does a person get staph or MRSA?

Staph and MRSA can be spread when a person:

- Has direct skin-to-skin contact with an Infected person
- Touches surfaces that have staph on them from someone else's infection (e.g., towels, athletic equipment, used bandages)

Staph is usually not spread through the air.

### How are staph and MRSA infections treated?

Some staph skin infections do not need treatment; others are treated with antibiotics. If the doctor gives you antibiotics, make sure you take all of the medicine, even if the infection is getting better. Call your doctor back if the infection does not get better after a few days. If other people you know or live with get the same infection tell them to go to their doctor.

### Can a child with an MRSA infection go to school?

Unless the health care provider advises not to attend school, children should be allowed to attend school as long as their infection is not draining and can be covered by a dry dressing. Physical activity or sports that involve skin-to-skin contact should be avoided until approval from a health care provider is obtained.

### Do schools need to be closed and disinfected if a student has an MRSA infection?

Health Officials do not recommend closing facilities for cleaning. Closing and cleaning give people a false sense of security that they are safe from staph. Once people return, so does the staph. MRSA is spread by direct skin-to-skin contact or contact with shared items or surfaces that your hands touch and move around. Rather, it is best to have policies and procedures in place to clean surfaces and equipment regularly.

### How do you prevent getting Staph & MRSA ?

Frequent hand washing is the easiest way to prevent MRSA and other infections. Using soap and warm water, wash hands for 20 seconds; thoroughly scrub hands between fingers and fingernails. If soap and water are not available, alcohol-based hand cleaner works well. If hands have visible dirt it is best to use soap and water.



## When should hands be washed?

- Frequently throughout the day, especially after contact with people and shared surfaces or equipment
- Before and after athletic practice, games, or working out
- After sneezing, coughing, blowing or touching the nose
- Before and after touching the eyes, nose, or mouth
- Before and after touching skin that has open sores, boils
- After using the toilet or urinal
- After touching any item soiled with wound fluids, such as bandages, dressings or bedding
- After cleaning the bathroom, changing your bedding, or doing laundry
- Before preparing food, eating, or drinking.



Amador County's information and guidance on MRSA has been developed jointly by Amador County Public Health, Amador County Environmental Health and Amador County Unified School District.

## What else can be done to help prevent MRSA and staph infections?

- Bathe regularly
- Keep broken skin areas clean and wash with soap and water
- Keep skin sores, scrapes and abrasions covered until healed
- Don't share personal items such as towels, clothing, razors, or other items that touch skin
- Wash soiled clothes, sheets, and towels with water and laundry detergent and dry completely in a hot dryer.

For further information please contact:  
Amador County Public Health  
[http://www.co.amador.ca.us/depts/public\\_health/](http://www.co.amador.ca.us/depts/public_health/)  
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# Guidelines and Information on MRSA Infections in Amador County Schools



## What You Need To Know

Amador County Public Health Department  
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