

Patient information–infection control department

MRSA screening

You have been given this leaflet because you might be at increased risk of carrying the bacteria MRSA.

What is MRSA?

MRSA stands for Meticillin–Resistant Staphylococcus aureus. It is a bacteria that can live harmlessly on human skin, in nasal passages, or in the mouth.

Why is it important?

The MRSA bacteria do not normally affect healthy people, and the majority of people who carry it do not have symptoms and are not aware they are carrying it. This is referred to as colonisation, but when a person goes in to hospital carrying MRSA and has a procedure that involves breaking the skin, then the MRSA can get into the body and may cause an infection. MRSA is a type of bacteria that has become resistant to group of antibiotics called Meticillin however there are still some antibiotics that can be used to treat MRSA.

What are we doing to prevent MRSA infection?

At Moorfields all patients who might be at increased risk from MRSA are screened for MRSA

We do this to check whether you are carrying MRSA. This will help reduce the risk of you developing an MRSA infection following a procedure and prevent the MRSA from spreading to other patients.

Screening Process

We will take a swab from your nose and any wounds that you might have to see if we can detect the presence of MRSA bacteria. The bacteria can only be identified in a laboratory, so it is quite normal for a person to be unaware of its presence on their skin.

When will you find out the result?

Your swab will be sent to a laboratory to test for the presence of MRSA bacteria. This process usually takes a few days. If the result is negative, you will not hear from the staff as no further preparation needs to be undertaken before your procedure.

If the swab result finds MRSA present, don't worry—our staff will contact you and let you know what to do.

What if I have MRSA?

Try not to worry as having MRSA should not interfere with your normal lifestyle

Our staff will give you information on how you can help to reduce any risks of infection. You will be given a body wash and ointment for your nose to be used for five days prior to your procedure. You might be asked to come back to hospital to pick up this medicine or your GP might be contacted and asked to prescribe it for you.

Will this affect my eye surgery?

No, you will be treated as planned. Your consultant will be informed of your MRSA result and of any precautionary measures that need to be taken.

If you have any queries regarding this please do not hesitate to contact the infection control team on 020 7253 3411 ext. 2539/4400.

Author: Infection Control Team
Revision number: 3
Approved: May 2017
Review date: May 2019

**Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS
Foundation Trust**
City Road, London EC1V 2PD
Phone: 020 7253 3411
www.moorfields.nhs.uk

Moorfields Direct advice line

Phone: 020 7566 2345

Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm,
for information and advice on eye
conditions and treatments from
experienced ophthalmic-trained nurses

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

Phone: 020 7566 2324 or 020 7566 2325

Email: pals@moorfields.nhs.uk

Moorfields' PALS team provides confidential advice and support to help you sort out any concerns you may have about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available at Moorfields. The PALS team can also advise you on how to make a complaint.

Remember

**Hand Hygiene is important to prevent
the spread of bacteria, including MRSA**

Your right to treatment within 18 weeks

Under the NHS constitution, all patients have the right to start their consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks of being referred by their GP. Moorfields is committed to fulfilling this right, but if you feel that we have failed to do so, please contact our patient advice and liaison service (PALS) who will be able to advise you further – see above for contact details. For more information about your rights under the NHS constitution, please visit www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs.