Antiseptic washes for the treatment of MRSA before admission

**Information for patients**

**Pre-Operative Assessment**

**What is MRSA?**

Staphylococcus Aureus is a bacterium which can often be found living on the skin of healthy individuals, particularly the nasal passages and warm moist areas of the body.

The bacterium can live on the skin without detection and without causing any harm. This is called colonisation. However, if the bacterium enters a wound or the blood stream, it can cause an infection. This treatment is aimed at reducing the risk of infection and the need for certain antibiotics.

MRSA is short for Meticillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus. It is a bacterium that is resistant to some antibiotics we commonly use to treat infection. MRSA infection is treatable with certain antibiotics.

The MRSA may have been on your skin before you came into hospital. It is usually spread by human contact, and can easily be transferred by hands.

**What are the signs and symptoms?**

MRSA can live on the skin without detection and without causing any harm. It can sometimes cause boils, abscesses and wound infections.

**Why is it important to know that I have got MRSA?**

Body colonisation of MRSA can be reduced by the use of antiseptic washes, once known. This will reduce the likelihood of the bacteria infecting a wound or the blood stream. For all future admissions it would be helpful if you inform nursing staff that you have had MRSA in the past, so they can repeat body / nasal swabs taken and a side room will be provided for you (where available).

**How do I use the antiseptic washes?**

- For newly diagnosed colonisations of MRSA this treatment starts as soon as the results are known for an initial period of **five days** if you have been prescribed Bactroban® or **10 days** if you have been prescribed Naseptin®.
- For previously diagnosed colonisations of MRSA this treatment **starts three days before surgery**, and continues for **five days in total**.
- **It is important you use the antibacterial wash on the morning of your surgery before admission.**
- Please remember to bring this treatment with you to continue whilst you are in hospital.
Instructions: Use of the antiseptic wash

Precautions  • For external use only  • Avoid contact with eyes

1. Wet the skin, but do not keep the water running.
2. Put the antiseptic wash directly onto your skin using your hands.
3. Wash vigorously from head to toe*. Pay particular attention to the following areas:
   - Hairline and facial hair
   - Under your arms
   - Around your nostrils
   - Between your legs and between your toes

Leave in contact with your skin for 60 seconds.
4. Rinse from head to toe.
5. Dry thoroughly, using a clean towel each time.

5 day washing

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<th>Day 4 Surgery day</th>
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How do I use the nasal ointment?

Start the nasal ointment **3 days before admission** for five days, including your stay in hospital. Insert a small amount of ointment in each nostril **three times a day** using a cotton bud. Close your nostrils by pinching the sides of your nose together. This will help spread the ointment.

*Routine shaving should be stopped at least two days before your surgery on all areas of your body, including the legs and underarms. This is to prevent any skin irritation or damage which could lead to an infection. Continue to wash/shower or bathe with your regular products at home. You can continue to shave your face and neck.*

Will I need any further treatment or repeat swabs?

Most people only need one course of treatment, though occasionally further courses are necessary.

You will need to perform further swabs at home in the month leading up to surgery. You will also need to repeat nose and groin swabs at home on the following dates:

1.  
2.  
3.  
4.  

**If you do not follow these instructions your operation may be cancelled.** Best practice recommends 3 sets of negative screening results before routine surgery can continue.

How do I complete the nose swab?

1. Please begin by washing your hands.
2. Open the sterile pot and place it on a stable surface.
3. Open the sachet of Normasol solution and pour it into the pot.
4. Carefully peel down the outer packaging of each swab and remove the plastic tube inside.
5. Place the provided identification label 'Nose' onto the tube.
6. Carefully remove the cotton swab from the packet by the black handle. Moisten the cotton bud by dipping it into the Normasol solution.
7. Gently swirl one swab around the inside of both nostrils 5 to 6 times.
8. Snap the white lid off the specimen tube and firmly push the swab in place down the tube.

何 do I complete the groin swab?

Repeat initial process as above (steps 1-5) affixing the identification label 'Groin' onto the tube

1. Gently rub the moistened swab in both sides of your groin (the folds of skin on the inside of the top of your thighs) ensuring the swab does not touch your clothing.
2. Snap the white lid off the specimen tube and place the swab down the tube. Firmly push the swab in place.
3. Place both tubes inside the plastic bag attached to the microbiology request form. Peel off the mustard coloured strip covering an adhesive strip and close like an envelope.
4. Complete the date highlighted on the front of the microbiology form. Wash your hands when you have finished.

**What do I do with the swabs now?**

On the same morning you do your swabs, hand them into your GP reception to be returned to the hospital laboratories for testing. You will only be contacted by the hospital if your swabs are found to be positive.

**Are there any side effects?**

Occasionally you may experience skin irritation or a rash. If this occurs please ring the appropriate Unit where you were seen. There are other antiseptic washes available to use should this occur.

**How will it affect my family and friends at home?**

- Live a normal life and continue your communal living.
- Continue with your normal sleeping arrangements with your partner.
- Continue good hand washing. Liquid soaps are preferable to bars of soap. Use separate flannels and towels.
- Ensure any cuts or wounds are suitably covered.

**Is there anything else I can do to help myself?**

- During the five days of antiseptic washes please put on clean underwear and clothes every day.
- Avoid using cotton handkerchiefs and use paper tissues.
- Do not use a roll-on deodorant; use a spray-on deodorant.
- Ensure good hand washing at all times, particularly before eating and after using the toilet.
- Use antiseptic mouthwash and brush your teeth twice a day.

**Who can I contact if I have any questions?**

Pre operative Assessment - Northern General Hospital: 0114 226 6235  
Pre operative Assessment - Royal Hallamshire Hospital: 0114 271 3146  
Metabolic Bone Clinic - Northern General Hospital: 0114 226 6544  
P2 Arthroplasty ward - Royal Hallamshire Hospital: 0114 271 3142  
Rheumatology - Royal Hallamshire Hospital: 0114 271 1957

**Where can I find more information?**

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals:  
https://publicdocuments.sth.nhs.uk/pil1564.pdf  
https://publicdocuments.sth.nhs.uk/pil3515.pdf

NHS Choices:  
https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/mrsa/

Alternative formats can be available on request. Email: alternativeformats@sth.nhs.uk

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