

# Antiseptic washes to reduce MSSA carriage

Wash lotion



**Information for patients**  
Infection Prevention and Control

## What is MSSA?

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

The bacterium lives on the skin in about one third of people without detection and without causing any harm. This is called carriage (or colonisation).

However, the bacterium can enter the body through open areas in the skin via wounds or a drip (a plastic tube to give medicines through the vein) which may then cause an infection.

MSSA is short for **m**ethicillin-**s**ensitive *Staphylococcus aureus* and it is sensitive to antibiotics that we commonly use to treat infection.

## How is MSSA different from MRSA?

MRSA is short for **m**ethicillin-**r**esistant *Staphylococcus aureus* and belongs to the same family of bacteria. However, MSSA is easier to treat as it is sensitive to a wider range of antibiotics.

## Why are antiseptic washes being introduced?

Approximately one third of people carry the MSSA bacterium on their skin (carriage).

By routinely using antiseptic bodywashes on all patients we hope to reduce MSSA body carriage and the likelihood of the bacteria infecting a wound, the skin around your drip or the blood stream.

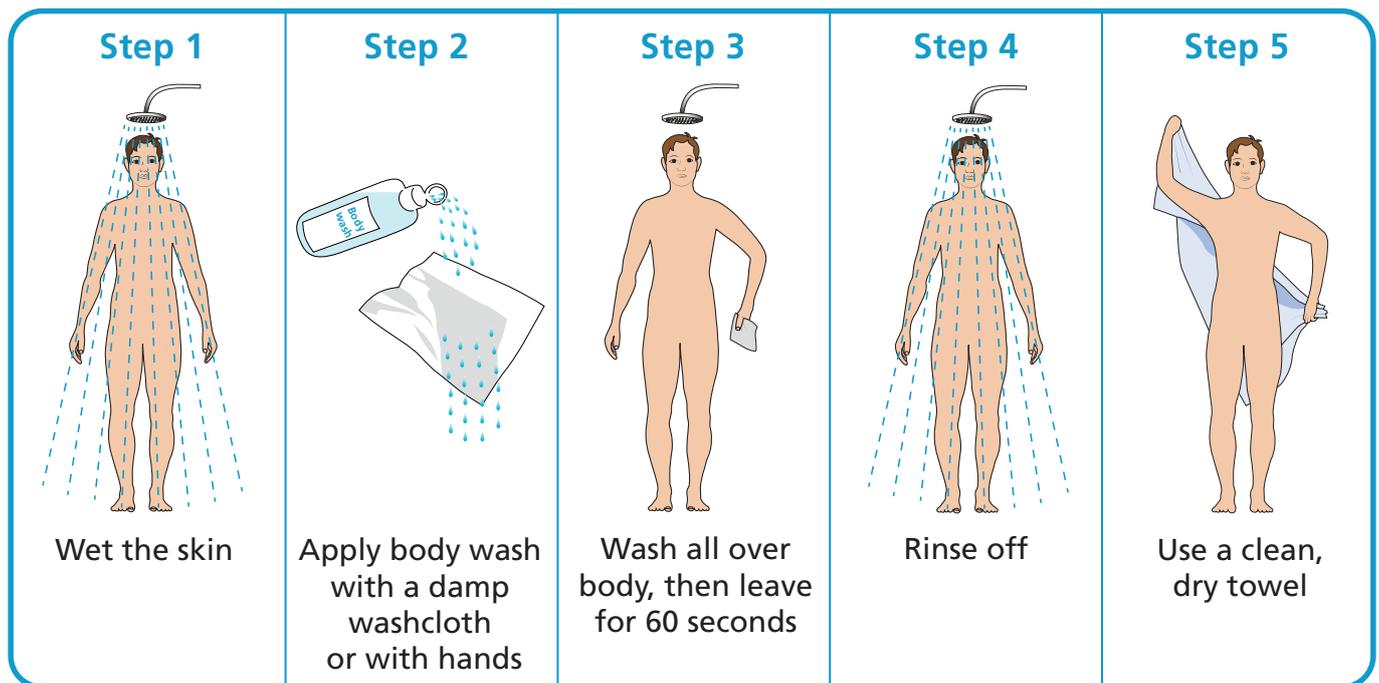
## How do I use the antiseptic washes?

You or your healthcare worker, who helps to wash you, will be given a wash (named Octenisan).

The wash should be **used once daily on your body and twice weekly on your hair** whilst you are in hospital.

**Precautions:** For external use only; avoid contact with eyes, mouth or in the vagina or anus.

1. Wet the skin.
2. Put the skin cleanser directly onto your skin and hair using your hands or the disposable cloth.
  - The skin cleanser should be applied to wet skin and hair but not whilst in the bath or under running water.
3. Wash vigorously from head to toe.
  - Pay particular attention to the following areas:
    - Skin creases
    - Under arms
    - Between fingers and toes
    - Between the legs
  - Leave in contact with the skin for 60 seconds.
  - You may use your own body wash, shampoo and conditioner afterwards if you wish.
4. Rinse from head to toe.
5. Dry thoroughly, using a clean towel each time.



### Are there any side effects?

Occasionally you may experience skin irritation or a rash. If this occurs please inform your nurse.

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

- Ensure good hand washing at all times, particularly before eating and after using the toilet.
- Avoid touching any wounds or drips that have been put in place by medical staff.

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

The MSSA Infection Prevention and Control Microbiologist lead is Dr Gayti Morris, who works in the Microbiology Department, Laboratory Medicine Directorate at the Northern General Hospital.

- **0114 271 5248** (Microbiology Secretaries)  
Monday to Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm

## Where can I find more information?

Further information about MSSA is available via the Public Health England website:  
**<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>**

An online version of this leaflet is available on the Sheffield Teaching Hospitals website:  
**<https://publicdocuments.sth.nhs.uk/pil3887.pdf>**



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