

How to Break the Chain of Infection in your Outpatient Clinic/Medical Office



INFECTIOUS AGENT

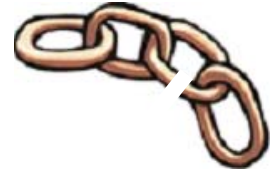
(Germ that causes the disease) =

MRSA

(Methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*)

How to break the chain:
Kill or remove agent

- Identify individuals who are infected or colonized & treat appropriately
- Clean surfaces, then disinfect them with an EPA-registered disinfectant following manufacturer's instructions
- **Wash hands!**



SUSCEPTIBLE PERSON

(How likely a person is to get sick after being exposed to the germ) =

Anyone can get MRSA, but it is more likely if there are:

- Crowded living conditions
- Lack of cleanliness
- Frequent skin-to-skin contact
- Abraded skin
- Shared sports equipment
- Shared personal hygiene items
- Lack of healthcare access
- Overuse of antibiotics

How to break the chain:
Stop germs from entering

- Practice good personal hygiene
- **Wash hands!**
- Maintain a strong immune system through healthy living practices
- Take antibiotics appropriately – only when needed; take all prescribed

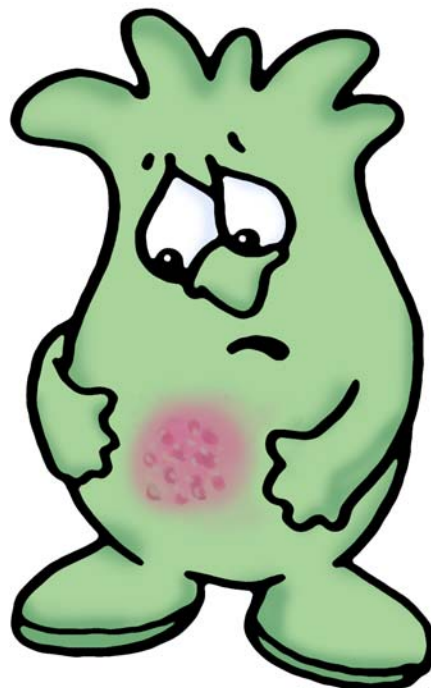
RESERVOIR

(Where the germ normally lives) =

Skin and Nose of individuals infected or colonized with MRSA

How to break the chain:
Eliminate or reduce reservoir

- Incise and drain (I & D) abscesses
- Do culture and sensitivity (C & S) of skin/soft tissue infection
- **Wash hands!**
- Prescribe antibiotics, if indicated, based on results of C & S report
- Consider decolonization



MEANS OF TRANSMISSION

(How the germ travels from the reservoir to a person) =

Hands, Infection Site and Fomites

(Fomites-items or environmental surfaces contaminated with body fluids containing MRSA)

How to break the chain:
Do not allow germs to escape and travel

- **Wash hands** / Use alcohol-based hand sanitizers
- Keep nails short. Acrylic nails should not be worn
- Avoid touching own nose, face while providing care
- Keep skin infections covered with clean, dry bandages
- Use contact precautions
- Clean and disinfect exam room and equipment
- Do not share sports equipment, towels, soap, clothing, razors, linens....

