

### Surgical Sites

To reduce migration of bacteria into surgical sites, the CDC recommends:

- Multiple pre-operative skin preparation procedures to reduce the patient's skin flora including:
  - Preoperative antiseptic showering
  - Patient skin preparation in the operating room with antiseptic scrubs and solutions

### Environmental Decontamination

According to CDC Standard Precautions, environmental decontamination using an EPA-registered disinfectant is essential for control of pathogens such as MRSA that may contaminate patient care areas.

- Use dedicated supplies and personnel to clean areas under Contact Precautions
- Consider disposable supplies, and change mop heads frequently
- Use the correct cleaning solutions
- Prioritize room cleaning of patients on Contact Precautions

### Hospital-Associated Infections

As a healthcare professional, you know that hospital-associated infections (HAIs) represent a global crisis that has reached devastating proportions. At Kimberly-Clark, we share your concerns about HAIs and are just as passionate as you are about prevention. That is why we have prepared this brochure to support you in your daily fight against preventable HAIs such as Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA).



**MRSA?**  
**NOT ON MY WATCH.\***

1 [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar\\_MRSA\\_spotlight\\_2006.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar_MRSA_spotlight_2006.html).

2 Elixhauser, A. (AHRQ) and Steiner, C. (AHRQ). Infections with Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) in U.S. Hospitals, 1993-2005. HCUP Statistical Brief #35, July 2007. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD.

3 MRSA: Time for Action Study Guide, p.11. Kimberly-Clark Knowledge Network Video Education Program. 2007.

4 CDC. Guideline for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Settings 2007. [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/gl\\_isolation.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/gl_isolation.html).

5 CDC/HICPAC. Guidelines for Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings. October 25, 2002 / 51(RR16):1-44.

6 APIC Text of Infection Control and Epidemiology, 2nd Edition. January 2005.



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### Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA)

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality data (AHRQ), the proportion of antimicrobial-resistant infections in healthcare settings has been growing.

- From 1974 to 2004, MRSA infections increased from 2% of the total number of staph infections to 63%<sup>1</sup>
- Patients diagnosed with MRSA infections rose from 1,900 in 1993 to 368,600 in 2005<sup>2</sup>
- In 2005, MRSA caused more than 94,000 life-threatening infections and nearly 19,000 deaths in the U.S. alone
  - Of these, 85% were associated with healthcare settings

### Preventing Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) Infections

Before a person can develop an infection with MRSA, they must first become contaminated and then colonized with the antibiotic-resistant strain of bacteria. MRSA transmission occurs by contact with contaminated hands, equipment or environmental surfaces. MRSA is known for its ability to survive and proliferate on virtually all surfaces, which have patient or healthcare worker contact. In addition, studies have shown that clinicians' personal protective equipment (PPE), such as gowns and gloves, become contaminated with MRSA after caring for colonized or infected patients. This PPE can then potentially serve as a source for healthcare worker, patient or environmental contamination unless changed according to Standard Precaution or Contact Precaution protocols.<sup>3</sup>

**The following guidelines, which are important in helping prevent the spread of MRSA, have been adapted from CDC Standard Precautions and Transmission-Based Contact Precautions.**

### Exam Gloves

**Gloves should be:**

- Worn when touching blood, body fluids, secretions and excretions or contaminated items, mucous membranes and non-intact skin
- Selected with the appropriate durability for the task at hand

- Changed between patients, and between tasks and procedures on the same patient after contact with possibly infected material
- Removed promptly after use and before touching non-contaminated items and surfaces
- Hands should be washed when gloves are removed
- Worn for all contact with patients known or suspected to be colonized or infected with MRSA

### Facial Protection

**Masks should be worn:**

- During procedures and patient care activities likely to generate splashes or sprays of blood, body fluids or secretions
- When caring for patients with open tracheostomies and the potential for projectile secretions
- In circumstances where there is evidence of transmission from heavily colonized sources such as burn wounds

### Protective Apparel

**Gowns should be:**

- Worn to protect skin and prevent soiling of clothing during procedures and patient care activities when contact of clothing or exposed skin with blood or body fluids, secretions and excretions is anticipated

- Selected according to the patient care activity, removed promptly if soiled, and hands cleansed thoroughly after removal
- Worn for all contacts with patients known or suspected to be colonized or infected with MRSA

### Hand Hygiene

**Hand washing with soap and water should be performed:**

- When hands are visibly soiled or contaminated with blood, body fluids, or body substances
- When caring for patients with spore forming organisms such as *Clostridium difficile*, whether or not gloves are worn
- If hands are not visibly soiled, the use of alcohol-based hand rubs is recommended<sup>4,5</sup>

According to the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC), healthcare providers caring for patients with suspected or confirmed MRSA infection or colonization should perform hand hygiene at the following times:

- Before and after direct contact with patients
- Between procedures on the same patient
- After contact with potentially contaminated inanimate objects in the immediate vicinity of the patient
- After removing gloves<sup>6</sup>

### Additional Resources

For more information on ways to prevent HAIs, including further evidence-based guidelines, visit [www.HAIwatch.com](http://www.HAIwatch.com) and these websites:

[www.aacn.org](http://www.aacn.org)  
[www.aorn.org](http://www.aorn.org)  
[www.apic.org](http://www.apic.org)  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)  
[www.ihi.org](http://www.ihi.org)  
[www.safecarecampaign.org](http://www.safecarecampaign.org)  
[www.who.int](http://www.who.int)