

Information on MRSA Exposure

It has been determined that you have been exposed to MRSA bacteria. MRSA exposure refers to a situation in which someone has been treated at the same ward as a patient with MRSA.

There are many useful bacteria on people's skin. One of these is called *Staphylococcus aureus*. *Staphylococcus aureus* is often found not just on the skin, but also in the nasal mucous membrane and sometimes in the throat. A type of *Staphylococcus* resistant to antibiotics that would be effective against normal *Staphylococcus* is called Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus Aureus* (MRSA).

MRSA transmission has been rare in Finland so far, but often occurs in hospitals abroad.

Every effort is being made to prevent MRSA from spreading in hospitals because the spread of drug-resistant bacteria would make it more difficult to treat infections. Outside hospitals, exposure to MRSA is not harmful.

MRSA is transmitted from one person to person by contact. Close attention to hand hygiene is the most important means of preventing it from spreading. In addition, samples are collected from people who have been exposed to MRSA in order to check that they have not acquired it. People who have been treated in a hospital abroad during the past year are checked as well.

Fortunately, only a small portion (less than 5%) of people exposed to MRSA get it, so 95% of samples turn out to be negative.

We think it is important for you to have MRSA samples taken at an outpatient clinic appointment or at your next hospital visit so that we can make sure you have not got MRSA. In certain situations, it is important to rule out MRSA even before you are hospitalized. These situations include, for example, planned surgery or childbirth. The samples can also be taken at your local health center in these cases. Samples are taken from the nose, the throat, any wounds, and from the groins/perirectal region. The sampling is painless and is done at no extra cost to you. The results will be shared with you at your next outpatient clinic appointment or hospital admission.

We hope you agree with the infection control procedures at our hospital, and we apologize for any additional inconvenience caused.

Patient instruction | HUS Infection Control Unit | Approved 10.5. 2023