

MRSA – Patient Information

Eye Surgery.

In line with Department of Health guidance, hospitals and ourselves routinely screen patients in order to prevent the spread of MRSA prior to a procedure taking place. Where patients are suspected of carrying MRSA, or found to be carrying MRSA, they would be nursed in isolation.

MRSA – Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus

Staphylococcus Aureus is a common bacterium found in the nose, throat and on the skin of many people. It is more commonly found on skin that is broken including cuts, sores or rashes such as eczema. MRSA can infect both accidental wounds (cuts and grazes) as well as those made during surgery.

This risk is greater if you are already unwell; therefore if MRSA gets into a wound it can delay the healing process and the only antibiotics that can be used have to be used under close medical supervision.

Eye infections following cataract surgery is uncommon reported as 1 in 500 to as low as 1 in 30,000. MRSA infections are almost unheard of in eyes, these infections are of more concern in general and orthopaedic surgery.

However if the Routine swabs have revealed you are a carrier, do not worry it is relatively easy to eradicate the bacteria.

However we will wish to ensure you are clear of MRSA Staphylococcus before undertaking eye surgery.

If you are found to be a MRSA Carrier

Depending on the sensitivities of the bacteriological swabs when taken, the doctor will prescribe appropriate antibiotics. Typically for nasal MRSA carriers this will be a nasal bacteriological ointment i.e. Mupirocin 2% which is applied three times a day for five days. In addition, we recommend washing the body with Chlorhexidine wash in the evening and after three days all towels and bed linen need to be changed and washed in a high temperature.

You will then have a further set of MRSA swabs taken to ensure that you are free of infection.

It is vital that MRSA is not transferred from one patient to another, causing cross infection. Direct person-to-person contact is the most common way of contracting MRSA.

Hand hygiene

Ensure that whenever you are near a person who has just had surgery, or going to have surgery, you wash your hands with some antibacterial wash. Hand gels are an alternative but does not remove dirt and debris. Thus hand washing is the most effective way of minimising cross-infections. Undertake this along with hand gels when entering hospital areas.