



Stony Brook Southampton Hospital

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What is MRSA?

MRSA stands for **M**ethicillin **R**esistant **S**taphylococcus **aureus**. It is a bacterium (germ) that is resistant to the usual antibiotic treatment like penicillin. *Staphylococcal aureus* (*S. aureus*) is a bacterium (germ) that is often found living on the skin and nose. Approximately 3 out of 10 people have *S. aureus* living on (colonizing) their skin and it usually causes no harm.

Who is at risk of getting MRSA?

Anyone can get MRSA. You can get this germ the same way you get the common cold. This means touching someone or something that has MRSA on it, and then touching your eyes, nose, or skin. MRSA can live on people, surfaces, and items for a while—days to weeks. However, you can kill MRSA by using effective cleaning methods.

Who will be screened for MRSA?

If your surgery involves implantable device, you will be screened for MRSA colonization. There are additional criteria, including but not limited to: Hemodialysis patients, healthcare workers, people with history of MRSA, residents of long term nursing care facilities.

What is the process for screening?

You will have a cotton swab gently inserted into each nostril. It does not hurt but it may tickle.

Who will get the results?

Your physician will be notified of the results. If you are colonized with bacteria, you may receive a specific antibiotic treatment for MRSA. During your postoperative stay at Southampton Hospital, you may also be given a private room or share a room with someone who also has MRSA.