

# Staphylococcal Infections

Also called: Staph:

**Staph** is short for Staphylococcus, a type of bacteria. There are over 30 types, but Staphylococcus aureus causes most staph infections, including:

- Skin infections
- Pneumonia
- Food poisoning
- Toxic shock syndrome
- Blood poisoning ( bacteremia)
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Skin infections are the most common. They can look like **pimples** or **boils**. They may be red, swollen and painful and sometimes have pus or other drainage.

Anyone can get a staph skin infection. You are more likely to get one if you have a **cut or scratch**, or have contact with a person or surface that has staph bacteria.

The best way to prevent staph is to **keep hands and wounds clean**. Most staph skin infections are easily treated with antibiotics or by draining the infection. Some staph infections are harder to treat. These are commonly called **MRSA**.

Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (**MRSA**) causes an infection that is resistant to several common antibiotics. Community associated MRSA happens to people who have close skin to skin contact with others, such as contact sports. To prevent MRSA:

- Practice good hygiene
- Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered until healed
- Avoid contact with other people's wounds or bandages
- Avoid sharing personal items, such as towels, washcloths, razors or clothes
- Wash soiled towels and clothes in hot water with bleach and dry in hot dryer

If any wound appears infected, see your healthcare provider.

**Remember, good hand washing is your first and best defense.**