

AT YOUR SERVICE

NEWS FROM THE VAN BUREN/CASS DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Volume 9, Issue 3

November 2007

MRSA

MRSA is one type of bacterial staph infection. These infections are generally indistinguishable from other staph infections which include; boils, deep skin infections, infected cuts and abrasions, and impetigo. Recently the national media has generated significant attention on MRSA. However, over the past decade the local health department, hospitals and physicians have been dealing with MRSA. Whereas MRSA previously was mostly "healthcare acquired", now "community acquired" cases have become much more prevalent. The vast majority of community acquired cases will not be severe or life threatening. At high risk will continue to be those individuals in a compromised state of health, often in settings such as hospitals. Individual case reports of MRSA are not reportable in Michigan. Outbreaks are, however, reportable to the local health jurisdiction. An outbreak is defined as "three or more culture positive cases in a facility or in a community that are epidemiologically linked where transmission/spread is plausible."

Excellent resources about MRSA are available on our health department website:

www.vbcassdhd.org

These include:

MRSA Brochure (6.5 mb pdf)

www.cdc.gov/Features/MRSAinSchools

There are several reasons why school and health professionals are concerned about MRSA.

- MRSA infections are becoming more common in community settings, including schools.
- Staph (including MRSA) are spread by direct contact. In school settings, there are many

opportunities for direct contact among students, especially those on athletic teams.

- MRSA infections can vary widely in severity.
- Identifying a MRSA infection can be difficult because the symptoms of MRSA infection are similar to those of other skin infections. MRSA can only be diagnosed by culture and laboratory testing.

MRSA is spread most easily from draining boils and infections. However, spread can also occur from individuals that are carriers with no symptoms. Therefore, as with many other infections anyone can get MRSA. However, risk can be minimized:

Personal hygiene:

- Wash hands often with soap and water (or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer), especially after touching wounds or bandages.
- Do not share personal items, like towels, bar soap, wash cloths, razors, or clothing-even among family members.

Wound care:

- Seek care immediately at first signs of infection (red, swollen, painful, warm, draining pus)
- Keep wounds clean and covered with a dry bandage, especially if the wound is draining.
- Follow your healthcare provider's instructions on proper wound care.
- Throw away soiled bandages.

Laundry:

- Wash clothes, towels and sheets in water with laundry detergent at hottest suitable temperature. Add bleach, if desired (check label instructions). Dry in dryer at hottest suitable temperature do not "line dry".

Cleaning:

Clean and disinfect high-touched or soiled surfaces (for example; door knobs and phones frequently used, and shared sports equipment between uses) according to item label cleaning instructions. Types of cleaning/disinfecting products include soap and water, diluted bleach, Lysol®, Original Pine-sol®. Follow label instructions.

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Van Buren/Cass District Health Department Program Statistics

Program	Description	2006	2005	2004
Clinic Health: Health Promotion/Disease Prevention activities in a clinic setting.				
Family Planning	Unduplicated individuals served	1,978	1,811	1,978
Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program	Women 40-64 years old screened for breast and cervical cancer.	122	129	108
Bangor School Based Clinic (opened in May 2006)	Individuals ages 10 to 21 receiving services.	371	n/a	n/a
Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic	Number of persons examined for the presence of sexually transmitted disease.	1,047	1,065	955
HIV Counseling and Testing	Number of individuals receiving HIV education.	3,514	3,435	3,384
Immunizations	Number of vaccines administered.	*7,112	3,710	2,587
Hearing Screenings	Pre-school and school aged children screened.	6,797	8,396	6,828
Vision Screenings	Pre-school and school aged children screened.	12,707	14,187	13,657
Children's Special Health Care	Children 0-21 years of age receiving services.	627	598	677
Environmental Health Services: Inspections and education of the public to prevent or abate environmental health hazards.				
Food Service	Number licensed establishments.	415	410	425
Well & Septic Permits	Number well and septic permits issued	2,155	2,558	2,650
Substance Abuse: Treatment and prevention programs.				
Treatment Services	Individual counseling sessions	2,017	1,803	1,800
New Directions Criminal Justice Treatment Program	Number of participants	194	136	121
Prevention Education Services	Individuals receiving services	*5,945	4,362	n/a

For US, Michigan, and local community vital statistics visit the Van Buren/Cass District Health Department's website @ www.vbcassdhd.org or the Michigan Department of Community Health's website @ www.michigan.gov/mdch.