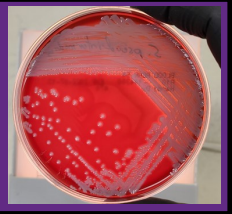




# Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus*

## Information for Veterinarians

My Small Animal Patient has been diagnosed with a MRSA or MRSP, now what?



### What is methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus*?

- *Staphylococcus aureus* frequently colonize people, while *S. pseudintermedius* more commonly colonize dogs and cats.
- Methicillin-resistant *S. aureus* (MRSA) and *pseudintermedius* (MRSP) are defined by resistance to **oxacillin** and are resistant to all beta-lactams.
- MRSA and MRSP have public health importance because they can cause severe infections that are difficult to treat in people and pets.

### Where did my patient get MRSA/MRSP?

- MRSA is most often spread to a pet from an infected or colonized person.
- MRSP is most often spread from another pet.
- MRSA/MRSP are typically spread through direct contact (hands, skin, nose, mouth, wounds) but can also spread via contaminated surfaces/equipment.
- Your patient might have already been colonized with MRSA/MRSP, then incurred a wound that became infected.
- MRSA and MRSP cause opportunistic infections in wounds, at surgical implants, and in the bladder.

### Is there risk to my staff and other patients?

- With proper personal protective equipment and hand hygiene, the risk of spread is low.
- Immunosuppressed staff should avoid contact with MRSA/MRSP-infected patients when possible.
- Everyone can reduce spread by washing hands.
- Anyone concerned about exposure should consult with their healthcare provider.

### How can we treat my patient?

- Do **NOT** screen healthy pets for MRSA/MRSP. Do **NOT** treat colonized pets with no clinical signs; you cannot decolonize a pet.
- Treat infected pets with antibiotics and fix underlying conditions (e.g., removing implants).
- Topical mupirocin is often effective.
- Consult with a pharmacologist, microbiologist, or infectious disease specialist as needed for treatment guidance.

### General precautions

- Isolate hospitalized MRSA or MRSP patients and minimize number of staff caring for them.
- Wear gloves/gowns/masks when handling MRSA/MRSP patients, cleaning wounds, and changing bandages, and wash hands after all contact.
- Use caution not to cross-contaminate your hospital equipment and surfaces.
- Follow manufacturer guidelines for cleaning products (e.g., dilution, storage, contact time).

### Where can I find more information?

- Kansas State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory  
(785) 532-5650 <http://www.ksvdl.org/>
- MU Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory  
(573) 882-8367 <https://vmdl.missouri.edu/>
- CDC Information about MRSA  
<http://www.cdc.gov/mrsa/index.html>
- CDC MRSA Cleaning and Disinfection  
<https://www.cdc.gov/mrsa/community/environment/index.html>

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