



Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus* Information for Dog and Cat Owners



What is methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus*?

- *Staphylococcus aureus* is a common bacteria on people's skin and nose but is rare on pets.
- *Staphylococcus pseudintermedius* is a common bacteria on pets.
- Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and *pseudintermedius* (MRSP) are less responsive to many antibiotics and are a public health concern.

Where did my pet get this bacteria?

- MRSA is typically spread to a pet from a person. MRSP is typically spread to a pet from another pet.
- MRSA/MRSP can be spread by individuals who have known infections or who are healthy but colonized with the bacteria.
- MRSA/MRSP is typically spread through touching (hands, skin, nose, mouth, wounds) but can also spread through contaminated surfaces.

Can MRSA/MRSP spread to my family and other pets?

- The risk for healthy pets and people to contract MRSA/MRSP from an infected pet is low.
- Immunosuppressed family members should avoid contact with MRSA/MRSP-infected pets during treatment.
- Everyone can reduce spread by washing hands.
- Anyone concerned about MRSA/MRSP exposure or illness should contact their healthcare provider.

How can we treat my pet?

- There is **NO** benefit to screening healthy pets or treating pets who are colonized with MRSA/MRSP but not showing clinical signs.
- Treatment can include antibiotics and fixing underlying conditions (e.g., removing implants).
- Although more resistant, most MRSA/MRSP infections can be treated successfully.
- Follow your veterinarian's guidance exactly for antibiotic treatment and follow-up care.

General precautions

- Keep your pet home during treatment, away from other people and pets.
- Keep infected wounds covered with a bandage.
- Wear gloves to change bandages; avoid touching the infected skin.
- Wash your hands before and after contact with your pets.
- Don't let your pets kiss or lick your face and hands.

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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