

# Preventing Healthcare-Associated Infections

Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) is a threat to patient safety. The prevention and reduction of MRSA is a top priority for us.

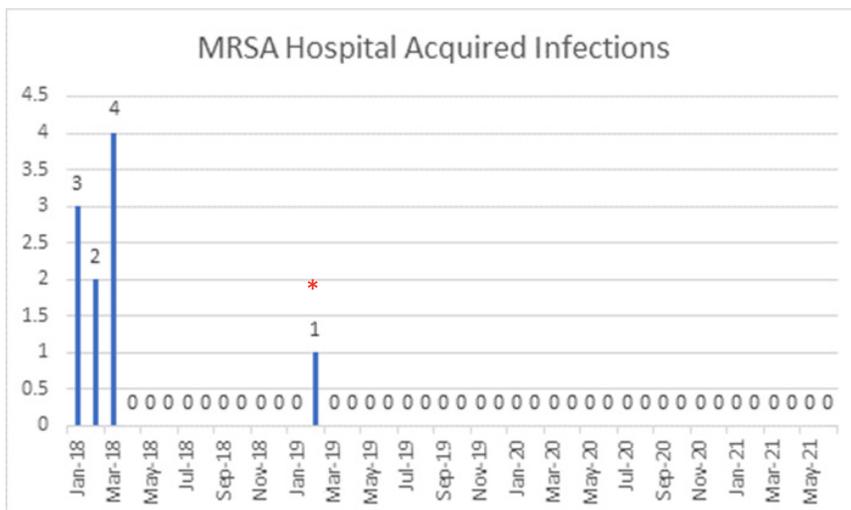
MRSA infection is caused by a type of staph bacteria that becomes resistant to several of the antibiotics used to treat ordinary staph infections. Staph bacteria are normally found on the skin or in the nose of about one-third of the general population. The bacteria are generally harmless unless they enter the body through a cut or other wound, and even then, they usually cause only minor skin problems in healthy people. Many people who are hospitalized are vulnerable for infection and are at a greater risk of the spread of MRSA.

## AdventHealth North Pinellas MRSA Program

In 2018, AdventHealth North Pinellas piloted a program trialing universal nasal decolonization of the bacteria MRSA. All hospitalized patients were treated with a nasal antiseptic swap to eliminate any MRSA in the nose, a common place the infection resides in the human body. By treating everyone with the nasal swap twice a day we could also eliminate the need to test everyone for MRSA. Staff were also encouraged to treat themselves with the nasal antiseptic. When treated with the nasal antiseptic, our patients didn't need to be put into isolation until MRSA tests results were available. This was a great satisfier for high risk patients since they did not have to be confined to their rooms, and their visitors and care team did not have to dress up with personal protective gear (gown, masks, gloves) to enter their rooms.

Another way to reduce MRSA is the regular use of chlorhexidine baths or wipes. Prior to surgery, patients are often asked to shower at home with chlorhexidine soap. Then just before surgery, patients are wiped down head to toe with chlorhexidine wipes to prevent surgical sites from getting MRSA from the skin.

**\*From April 2018 to March 2021 there was 1 case of hospital acquired MRSA at AdventHealth North Pinellas.**



Nothing is more important to us than you. Thank you for helping us put safety FIRST.