

## Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) Decolonization Protocol / Patient Instructions

### How do you know if you are an MRSA Carrier?

- By doing cultures of both nostrils, both armpits, and the area between the legs, 72 hours after the infection is gone and the antibiotics are stopped. You are an MRSA carrier if any of the cultures come back positive.

### Which MRSA patients should be cultured to see if they are carriers?

- Patients with MRSA more than once, MRSA in multiple family members, contact sports (such as football or wrestling) participants with a single case of MRSA, or those who request it.
- Patients with MRSA who are planning surgery.

## Decolonization Protocol

### 1. Bactroban 2% ointment 22 gm tube:

- Apply 3 times daily to each nostril for 5 days.
- Put a pea sized amount on a Q-tip and apply to the inside of your nostril, and repeat for the other nostril.
- **Do not** contaminate the ointment by touching the Q-tip to the end of the ointment tube after it has been inserted in your nostril. Use the “clean” end of the Q-tip, or use a new one for the second nostril.
- After application, press the nostrils together and release repeatedly for 1 minute to distribute the ointment throughout the nose.
- Save remaining ointment, it may be used again if your follow-up cultures are positive.

### 2. Chlorhexidine (Hibiclens) Showers:

- Use every other day x 3 showers total
- Clean your whole body using chlorhexidine, pay close attention to the arm pits, groin, and the area between the legs.
- Rinse completely, avoid contact with your eyes and inside your mouth.
- Save remaining chlorhexidine.

### 3. Clean your sheets, clothing, and home. Throw away partly used food products.

- Wear clean washed clothing daily for five days.
- Wash sheets twice or more during the five days.
- Clean areas you often touch in the home with bleach and water (1 teaspoon of bleach per cup of water)
- Wash all eating utensils after each use.
- Throw away any partly used food containers (cartons or jars) that could be contaminated.

### 4. Repeat cultures to make sure it worked

1. Repeat the cultures from the same sites 72 hours after the decolonization is completed.
2. If the first set of cultures is negative repeat a second set of cultures 48 hours later.
3. If all these cultures are negative then decolonization has been a success.