MRSA Skin Infection

- **Preventing CA-MRSA (Community Acquired Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus)?**

- Wash hands using liquid soap and water for at least 30 seconds. Hands should be washed on all sides including wrists and under fingernails.

- Dry hands well with disposable paper towels.

- Good hygiene, including daily showering and washing with soap and after all practices, workouts or games.

- Keep fingernails short and clean. Artificial nails have been known to harbor bacteria and may predispose one to skin infections.

- Do not share personal items with anyone. This includes towels, washcloths, linens, needles, balms, lubricants, soap, shampoo, deodorant, clothes, blankets and razors.

- Shave only those areas that are **absolutely necessary**, armpits (axilla) and legs. Be mindful of the fact that every shaved hair follicle is a **potential opening** for MRSA to easily penetrate.

- Use washcloths rather than scrunches. Throw out any loofah sponges which harbor bacteria.

- Do not leave used items “laying around”, i.e., wet towels, dirty clothes, sweaty uniforms.

- Wash bed linens and towels at least weekly with detergent and water at >160 degrees F for at least 25 minutes. Launder clothes as soon as possible. Towels and washcloths are a “one time use” item.

- Dry clothes and linens in a hot dryer until completely dry. Do not air-dry items. This helps kill bacteria on clothes and linens.

- Avoid handling body fluids of others.

- Use a barrier (towel or layer of clothing) between skin and shared equipment. Wipe down equipment before and after **every** use.
• Clean and disinfect all frequently touched surfaces with commercial disinfectant or a 1:100 solution of diluted bleach (1 tablespoon bleach in 1 quart of water). Keep room and home clean. Wipe desk and counter surfaces, doorknobs, and telephones.

• Keep any skin sores, bites, or cuts covered with a clean, dry dressing. Put any band-aids or dressings directly into the trash and not on counter or floor or any other place.

• Have any “pimple” or skin lesion, no matter how small, checked by a healthcare provider.

Preventing further spread of a MRSA infection?

• Cover the wound. Wash hands immediately after handling or caring for wound.

• Cut fingernails back so they are short and clean.

• Do not shave. If you must shave, dispose of razor after each use or change blade on razor after each use.

• There is a trend that college students are shaving “all over” body parts. Shaving each hair follicle contributes to MRSA growth by multiplying the portal of entry for these aggressive, infectious bacteria.

• Follow prevention steps above.

• Report any new lesions to your healthcare provider immediately. Discuss all of your concerns with them. Finish all medicines as prescribed.

• The Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Division of Disease Control can be contacted to voluntarily report CA-MRSA infections at 215-685-6741