

### **What is MRSA?**

MRSA is a type of staph infection that is resistant to treatment with methicillin and other antibiotics in the penicillin family. It differs from the common strain, *Staphylococcus aureus* (often called “staph”), which is one of many bacteria that normally reside in or on human skin and does not usually cause infection.

### **What are the typical symptoms of MRSA?**

Common signs of a skin infection include redness, warmth, swelling and tenderness. Often a MRSA infection will look like a spider bite, boil, abscess or pimple. If it shows no signs of healing and is left untreated, it could progress into a more serious illness.

### **How is MRSA spread?**

Studies in health care and community settings show it spreads through skin-to-skin contact, direct contact with the infected wound drainage or contact with contaminated surfaces or things such as sports equipment (helmets, pads, weight benches, etc.). MRSA skin infections are NOT spread through the air.

### **How can students protect themselves?**

Students can protect themselves from infections by:

- Practicing good hygiene (washing their hands frequently with soap and water or use alcohol based hand sanitizers). Hand washing is the number one method to prevent the spread of infection.
- Cover any open skin areas such as abrasions/cuts with clean dry bandages.
- Avoid sharing personal items (clothes, towels, etc.).
- If an open wound is present, do NOT use whirlpools, hydrotherapy pools, cold tubs, swimming pools, etc.
- See a doctor immediately if your son/daughter has a wound that is infected and not healing or is draining.

### **What measures have we taken?**

We met with our custodial staff and have implemented the following steps to ensure that they are being followed:

- Restrooms and classrooms are disinfected with an appropriate compound that kills MRSA and other bacteria and germs.
- Each time a room is cleaned the handles of doors and desktops are wiped and disinfected.
- Drinking fountains are cleaned and disinfected daily.
- The locker room, athletic equipment, weight equipment and all surrounding areas have been thoroughly sanitized.

Please help us to educate your child on what they can do to protect themselves. For more information about MRSA, please visit the Ohio Department of Health's website:

<http://www.odh.ohio.gov> and type “MRSA” in the search button. Please feel free to contact your building principal for additional information.