



Owensboro Catholic Schools

November 2007

Dear OCS Parents;

There is been a lot of information put forth by the media regarding MRSA (Methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus) over the past few weeks. I would like to take this opportunity to explain what MRSA is, how it is contracted, and the prevention of it.

What is MRSA? It is a type of “staph” infection that often causes skin infections and is resistant to many antibiotics, including penicillin.

What does it look like? A “spider bite”, turf burn, abscess, boil, impetigo, or an infected skin/wound.

How do you get MRSA? Touching someone’s MRSA-infected skin or surfaces that have MRSA on it, sharing sports equipment or personal hygiene items (bar soap, **towels**)
Overusing antibiotics, also stopping them early or missing doses.

How do we Stop the Spread of MRSA?

WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN With warm, soapy water.

Use 60% alcohol-based hand gel when soap and water are not available.

Report all skin infections to the school nurse/health assistant.

Cover all wounds with a clean, dry bandage taped on all four sides.

Staying home from school if wound drainage cannot be contained by a bandage.

Do not share personal hygiene items (bar soap, towels, razors) or clothing.

Avoid contact with other people’s skin infections.

Staph is a bacteria all of us have on our skin. It generally causes no problems unless our skin (our first line of defense) becomes compromised. The Owensboro Catholic Schools have taken this issue seriously. There is no need to become alarmed every time someone has a “staph” infection. Not all staph is MRSA. It has the potential to become MRSA. This is why it is important for EVERYONE to do their part in the prevention. If your child has a skin infection it is important to watch it carefully and contact your healthcare provider if you are concerned. It is also important to let the school nurse/health assistant know if there is a concern.

It bears repeating the best Offense is still the best Defense- **Wash your hands**. Not only will this help prevent the spread of staph, it will prevent the spread of streph, cold and influenza viruses as well. Thanks for doing your part! Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns at 684-3215.

Kathryn Crowe, RN, BSN

OCS Health School Coordinator