

October 19, 2007

Dear Parent/Guardian:

In response to media coverage of methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) infections around the country this past week, the Burlington County Health Department has received numerous calls from concerned residents.

We understand that hearing about a “super bug” can be very frightening, particularly to parents. However it is important to keep in mind a few key facts about MRSA:

- MRSA is not a new disease. It has been a challenge to healthcare providers and the public health community since the 1960s. It was first primarily associated with hospitals. In the last several years, it has also become increasingly common in the community.
- MRSA is a type of bacterial infection that is resistant to **some but not all** antibiotics. **It is treatable.**
- MRSA can cause skin infections. These infections result in redness, warmth, swelling, and tenderness. Often a MRSA infection will look like a spider bite, boil, abscess, or turf burn.
- MRSA skin infections are usually spread by skin-to-skin contact or by direct contact with the drainage from the wound. They may also be spread by contact with contaminated surfaces or things such as sports equipment or personal hygiene items. MRSA skin infections are NOT spread through the air.

Please be aware of the signs and symptoms of MRSA. If you or a family member has any of the symptoms listed above or on the enclosed fact sheet, please contact your medical provider. MRSA is treatable. However, if it is left untreated, it can become a serious illness.

We are working closely with your children’s school to ensure that all appropriate precautions and protocols are in place.

If you have any questions, please contact the Burlington County Health Department at (609) 265-5548.

Sincerely,

Robert Gogats, MA, HO
Public Health Coordinator
Burlington County Health Department