



# DISEASE NAME

## information

*Staphylococcus aureus*, often referred to simply as "staph," are bacteria commonly carried on the skin or in the nose of healthy people. In the past, most serious staph bacteria infections were treated with a certain type of antibiotic related to penicillin. Over the past 50 years, treatment of these infections has become more difficult because staph bacteria have become resistant to various antibiotics, including the commonly used penicillin-related antibiotics (1). These resistant bacteria are called methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, or MRSA.

## symptoms

Occasionally, staph can cause an infection; staph bacteria are one of the most common causes of skin infections in the United States. Most of these infections are minor (such as pimples and boils) and most can be treated without antibiotics (also known as antimicrobials or antibacterials). However, staph bacteria can also cause serious infections (such as surgical wound infections and pneumonia)

## what to do

Most staph bacteria and MRSA are susceptible to several antibiotics. Furthermore, most staph skin infections can be treated without antibiotics by draining the sore. However, if antibiotics are prescribed, patients should complete the full course and call their doctors if the infection does not get better. Patients who are only colonized with staph bacteria or MRSA usually do not need treatment. See your healthcare provider.