

Center Moriches Union Free School District

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December 17, 2012

Dear Parents,

I am writing to alert you about a bacterial infection that occasionally presents itself in school settings on Long Island: Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA). MRSA is a strain of bacteria that is highly resistant to many of the traditional antibiotics, such as penicillin and amoxicillin. For the most part, MRSA is transmitted skin to skin in hospitals, nursing homes, gymnasiums, weight rooms, locker rooms and less frequently in classrooms. It usually enters the body through cuts and sores, and initially often looks like a rash, pimple or boil. People infected with MRSA may develop a fever.

Our district has just been notified that there is a confirmed case of MRSA in the High School. In response to this, the district acted upon protocols developed to help guard against the spread of this bacterial infection including sanitizing instructional areas. If you suspect that your child may have MRSA, please contact your physician and take your child for a test. MRSA is treatable with strong, broad spectrum antibiotics. Also, please remind your children about the importance of good hygienic habits, and discuss with them the four prevention steps identified by the Centers for Disease Control:

1. Keep your hands clean by washing frequently and thoroughly with soap and hot water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
2. Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered with a bandage until healed.
3. Avoid contact with other people's wounds or bandages.
4. Avoid sharing personal items such as towels, razors, clothes, and athletic equipment- anything that could have touched the skin of an infected person.

It is important for the school district to be able to track students with MRSA. Therefore, please inform your school's nurse if your child is diagnosed with MRSA. If you have any questions about this infection, please contact your doctor, school nurse, or visit the Centers for Disease Control website at **www.CDC.gov**. For further information you can also consult the following websites:

Suffolk County Department of Health Services: <http://suffolkcountyny.gov/health>
Understanding MRSA: www.webmd.com

Sincerely,

Russell Stewart
Superintendent of Schools