

## The 10-point plan

### What you as a citizen should know about MRSA

1. MRSA is often called a 'hospital bacterium' because it is particularly dangerous for hospital patients with little resistance.
2. MRSA is a bacterium that is insensitive (resistant) to most types of antibiotics. The symptoms of the disease are very difficult to treat.
3. If you have been treated in a foreign hospital and subsequently require treatment in a hospital in your own country, you will be given special treatment upon arrival. Among other things, you will be isolated from other patients and you will have to wear a mouth mask. This is done to protect other patients.
4. MRSA can be contracted in a hospital, but also outside the hospital. The bacterium is usually transmitted through direct skin contact with someone who is already infected. MRSA infection can only be demonstrated by research in a laboratory. Healthy people are usually not affected by an MRSA infection.
5. If you have been found to be MRSA-contaminated, i.e. you are an MRSA carrier, the transmission of the contamination to others can be prevented by means of disinfectant soap, shampoo, nasal cream and/or skin ointment. Only if the MRSA contamination has led to an MRSA infection will you be treated with an antibiotic to which the MRSA bacteria are still sensitive.
6. If you are treated or admitted to hospital, it is important for you to know whether you are infected with MRSA. This is because MRSA can get in the way of your recovery. Doctors or nurses can tell you whether you belong to the risk group of people who could have MRSA. For the risk groups, go to [www.mrsa-net.nl](http://www.mrsa-net.nl) or [www.euprevent.eu](http://www.euprevent.eu) .
7. If you are in good health, the MRSA bacterium will disappear from your body in time. However, MRSA can be dangerous if your resistance is weakened, because the bacterium can then cause infections such as bone infections, wound infections or pneumonia.

8. What you yourself can do to reduce the risk of infection with MRSA:
  - \* Do not hesitate to ask your doctor, nurse or other health professional if they have disinfected their hands before shaking hands;
  - \* If you are going to a foreign hospital for treatment, ask in advance what measures have been taken there to prevent MRSA infection. Some hospitals are already affiliated with the 'eursafety healthnet seal of quality'. This guarantees that extra attention has been paid to this topic.
9. You can get information about MRSA and other bacteria in different ways. You can find information on the websites [www.mrsa-net.nl](http://www.mrsa-net.nl) or [www.euprevent.eu](http://www.euprevent.eu), or ask your healthcare professional. You can also contact a patient organisation.
10. The number of resistant bacteria is increasing rapidly due to the excessive and unnecessary prescription of antibiotics. For the future of ourselves, our children and our grandchildren, it is of great importance that antibiotics are better and above all more carefully used.