



Tarrant County Public Health

A healthier community through leadership in health strategy

The Facts About Staph

What is staph?

Staphylococcus aureus, often referred to as “staph,” are bacteria that can cause skin infections that are often initially mistaken for insect or spider bites. Staph bacteria are spread through person-to-person contact or contact with contaminated surfaces.

What are the symptoms of staph?

Symptoms of serious infection include fever or persistent draining, bleeding or red streaks at the infected site. The bacteria also can cause life-threatening conditions such as pneumonia and bloodstream infections. Some staph bacteria called methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, or MRSA, are resistant to commonly used antibiotics. Regular hand washing is the best way to prevent staph transmission. Using soap and water, or hand sanitizer – is essential in facilities where people work, live and play close together.

Ways to avoid infection:

- Practice good hygiene, especially regular hand washing.
- Do not share personal items such as towels or razors.
- Thoroughly clean shared items – toys, telephones, keyboards – using any household disinfectant, such as Lysol, Fabulosa or bleach (when using bleach, use a 1:100 bleach water solution [1 tablespoon per quart of water]).
- Cover open wounds or cuts with a clean, dry bandage.
- Seek medical attention if symptoms occur.
- Schools and employers in close-contact settings should create infection containment policies and provide prevention information to employees.

For more information, call 817-321-4700 or visit <http://health.tarrantcounty.com>

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