



## MRSP

### Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus Pseudintermedius*

#### What is MRSP?

Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus Pseudintermedius* is a species of Staph that is resistant to certain types of antibiotics. Staphylococcus bacteria are normal inhabitants of the skin of people and pets in low numbers; however, Staph has a capacity to overgrow and create infections. MRSP generally only affects pets, but has the capability to affect humans as well.

Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus Pseudintermedius* is very similar to Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, which is well known as MRSA and is generally contracted at human hospitals. People who are exposed to hospitals generally carry the bacteria on their skin or in nasal passages, which can be transmitted to pets as well. The only way to differentiate the two types is to perform a culture and sensitivity.

#### What is a resistant bacterial skin infection?

When a pet has a bacterial skin infection, especially a prolonged infection or chronic recurring infection, your veterinarian may be suspicious of a resistant infection. Resistant infections can develop when antibiotics are chronically used, when inadequate doses are prescribed or following a single course of antibiotics. Resistant infections can also be contracted from other pets and environment exposure such as hospitals, grooming facilities and dog parks.

#### What makes a pet more predisposed to contracting an infection?

Resistant skin infections can occur for numerous reasons. Pets with dermatology abnormalities may be more susceptible due to a weakened skin barrier. These abnormalities include allergies, immune mediated diseases, parasite infections, and many others. The defective skin barrier can allow for the bacteria to flourish and cause infection. Pets that are immunosuppressed because of uncontrolled thyroid disease, diabetes, cancer or other various reasons can be predisposed to contracting a resistant skin infection.

#### What are the appropriate treatments?

The best way to diagnose a resistant infection is to perform a Culture and Sensitivity. A sample of the infected area is obtained and submitted to the lab for speciation of the bacteria and antibiotic treatment recommendations. It is very imperative with a resistant infection that the antibiotics are given according to the prescribed directions. The veterinarian will want to examine the pet before antibiotics are stopped, which is generally 3 to 4 weeks after starting medications.

Topical antimicrobial medications (sprays and shampoos) may also be prescribed in conjunction with systemic medications, which decreases the amount of bacteria on the skin. This can decrease the amount of transmission of the infection into the environment and can help the infection resolve more quickly.

#### What precautions need to be taken?

It is important to decrease the amount of exposure of the infected pet into the environment. Your household pets should avoid grooming and boarding facilities, parks, business and other pets. Strict hygiene is also very important, even though the possibility of a human contracting the infection is low, it is possible. Contraction of

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the infection is concerning for humans that are immunosuppressed or have conditions that cause skin barrier defects such as eczema, psoriasis, open wounds, etc.

It is important to remember that even if a pet in the house hold is not showing symptoms, they can carry the bacteria on their skin.

**Recommendations for the home include:**

- Washing bedding that your pets come in contact with in hot water (60 degrees Celsius) twice weekly.
- Strict hand hygiene is imperative. Using an alcohol based hand sanitizer is recommended after every time you touch your pet, and washing your hands thoroughly when they become soiled.
- Sanitizing areas of your home where your pets have contact with at least twice weekly. Bleach is the most ideal cleaner, using a ratio of 1 part bleach to 10 parts water and letting the solution sit on the area for 10 minutes before rinsing. Steam cleaning is also a good option for areas that cannot be bleached.

**Recommendations for the pets in the home include:**

- If a pet in the house hold is scheduled for a veterinary appointment, please notify the veterinary staff that there is an unresolved resistant infection in the house hold. The office will need to take necessary precautions for sanitation. It is important to reduce exposure to other pets that they may come in contact with.
- If you have your pets scheduled for a surgical procedure it is best to wait until the infection in the house is resolved. Contraction to the pets in the house hold can be high, especially if they are immunosuppressed, have an incision and/or wound.

If you have any further questions, feel free to contact our office.

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