

Patient Records

The fact that you have had PVL *Staphylococcus aureus* will be recorded in your electronic patient record. This may result in additional tests being done prior to or during any future visits to hospital/healthcare setting.

How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?

Infection prevention & control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection prevention & control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. We ask that you, and anyone visiting you, use the hand sanitiser available at the entrance to every ward before coming in to and after leaving the ward. In some situations hands may need to be washed at the sink using soap and water rather than using the hand sanitiser as hand sanitisers are not suitable for use when dealing with patients who have symptoms of diarrhoea.

For infection prevention & control purposes and to keep you safe and well visitors are requested **not** to:

- Visit you if they are unwell
- Sit on your bed or use the patient toilets.
- Touch your wounds, or any medical devices, drips or catheters.

How can I find out more?

Contact the Infection Prevention & Control Department on:

Wycombe Hospital Tel: 01494 425456

Stoke Mandeville Hospital Tel: 01296 315337

Public Health England Tel: 0344 225 3861

Public Health England Website: <http://www.hpa.org.uk>

www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk

Follow us on Twitter @buckshealthcare

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Buckinghamshire Healthcare



NHS Trust

Panton-Valentine Leukocidin (PVL)

Staphylococcus aureus

Patient Information Leaflet

If you require a translation or alternative format of this leaflet please call
Infection Prevention & Control 01296 315337

Safe & compassionate care,

every time

What is PVL *Staphylococcus aureus*?

Staphylococcus aureus (SA) is a bacterium (germ) that commonly lives on healthy skin. About one third of healthy people carry it quite harmlessly, usually on moist surfaces such as the nostrils, armpits and groin. This is known as colonisation. Some types of *Staphylococcus aureus* produce a toxin called Panton-Valentine Leukocidin (PVL) and they are known as PVL-SAs.

What type of illness does it cause?

SA – commonly causes boils or skin abscesses. If these are caused by PVL-SAs they can be more severe, and can be associated with infection of lungs, blood, joints and bones.

How do you catch PVL-SA?

PVL-SA infections can be spread easily in settings where individuals are in close physical contact or may share towels e.g. families/household, education settings (including nurseries), military personnel in barracks, close contact sports e.g. rugby, judo.

How is PVL-SA treated?

Boils and abscesses will usually need to be opened and drained. Most infections will be treated with antibiotics. In addition, a five day course of skin treatment (washes and creams) will be necessary to reduce the likelihood of repeated infections.

How do I prevent passing PVL-SAs to other people?

Keep infected areas covered with clean, dry dressings. Change these as soon as discharge seeps to the surface. Do not touch or squeeze infected skin. This contaminates your hands and can push the PVL-SAs deeper into the skin. Wash hands frequently with liquid soap and water especially after changing your plasters, dressings and bandages or touching infected skin.

Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze particularly if you have a cold, because PVL-SAs can live in your nose. Throw the tissue in the bin at once and then wash your hands.

Use a separate towel and do not allow others to use it. Wash towels frequently in a hot wash (60 degrees celsius).

Cleaning at home. It is recommended to regularly vacuum and dust (wiping with a damp cloth) all rooms particularly your bedroom, personal items and shared items, such as telephones, computer keyboards etc.

Household detergent is adequate for cleaning. Clean your sink, taps and bath after use with a disposable cloth and household detergent, then rinse clean and throw the cloth away.

Can I go to work or school when I have a PVL-SA infection?

You should **not** work in a nursery, hospital, residential or care home or in the food industry until your skin has healed and you have permission to return to work from your local Occupational Health Department, GP or manager. Public Health England (PHE) practitioners and doctors will advise your GP on this.

You may continue with other types of work, provided you keep infected skin areas covered with clean, dry dressings. If you are not sure about working, contact your local Occupational Health Department or your GP.

Advice can be sought from PHE on children going back to school. People who have eczema or a more generalised skin condition should remain off work or school until treatment has been completed for both the eczema, skin condition and the PVL-SA infection.

How do I prevent becoming infected again?

You should take good care of your skin. If you suffer from eczema, discuss the best treatment for this with your GP. Keep all cuts and grazes clean, cover with dry dressings until scabbed over or healed. Shower or bathe daily. Put on clean clothes daily and wash bed clothes and towels regularly at the highest temperature the materials will allow.

In shared facilities such as gyms, use fresh towels. Only go when skin lesions have healed and put a towel between your skin and the equipment. Importantly, shower afterwards and use a separate (second) clean towel to dry yourself. Wash towels taken to shared facilities after each visit.

Seek medical help at the first sign of infection in a cut, such as redness, swelling, pain, or pus. Always tell healthcare professionals looking after you that you have had a PVL-SA infection. This will ensure that you receive appropriate treatment.