



# MRSA decolonisation treatment instructions for healthcare workers

Decolonisation is the process of eradicating or reducing asymptomatic carriage of MRSA. The nares are the primary site of colonisation. Decolonisation is the use of an antiseptic body wash and an antibiotic ointment.

## Pre-decolonisation general advice

- Any skin infections should be treated prior to decolonisation, with no wounds present.
- Remove any body piercings for the duration of the treatment.
- If skin irritation occurs, stop using the treatment and discuss with your staff health department.

### How to use the nasal ointment Apply twice a day for 5 days

1. Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand gel just before using your ointment.
2. Use a cotton bud to apply a 'double match head' amount of ointment to the inside of each nostril.
3. Spread the ointment around the nasal vestibule by squeezing the nose between thumb and forefinger, and rubbing them together for about 15 seconds.
4. Don't get the ointment near your eyes. If any of it gets into your eyes, rinse them well with cool water.
5. Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand gel as soon as you are finished.
6. Do not use any other nasal ointments or nasal sprays during the 5 days.

### How to use the body wash Use once a day for 5 days

1. Using a clean washcloth or your hands, apply body wash to all body areas. Ensure to apply under your arms, behind your ears and knees, your groin area, and between any skin folds.
2. When you have finished applying the body wash, leave it on your skin for 2 minutes.
3. Shampoo your hair using the body wash solution on day 1, day 3 and day 5. Normal conditioner can be used.
4. Thoroughly rinse the body wash off your skin.  
**Do not** wash with any other soap or cleanser.
5. Close your eyes and mouth when washing your face or shampooing. If you do get the body wash in your eyes or mouth – rinse well with cool water.
6. Dry off with a clean towel and put on clean clothing.
7. Use a moisturiser for dry skin.
8. If you have dentures, remove them before bed and clean thoroughly. Soak overnight in a denture cleaning product such as Steradent, Polident or for 1 hour each night for 5 nights in a chlorhexidine mouthwash solution.

## Post decolonisation general advice

- If post decolonisation clearance screening is indicated, your staff health department will contact you.

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

Produced by the Public and Aboriginal Health Division  
© Department of Health 2022

Copyright to this material is vested in the State of Western Australia unless otherwise indicated. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the provisions of the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced or re-used for any purposes whatsoever without written permission of the State of Western Australia.