



Staph Infection

Your child may have been exposed to staph infection. *Staphylococcus aureus* (*S. aureus* or staph) bacteria are the leading cause of skin and soft tissue infections.

If you think your child has a staph infection:

- Tell your childcare provider or call the school.
- Keep your child home from childcare and school if draining sores cannot be completely covered and contained with a clean, dry bandage.
- Your child does not need to stay home if only colonized.
- Activities: Avoid activities and contact sports where skin-to-skin contact is likely to occur until sores are healed.
- For more information, call Hennepin County HSPHD-Epidemiology at 612-543-5230 or call your local health department.

Parent/Guardian information

Symptoms

Your child may have infected areas that are red and warm with or without pus. Examples are boils, impetigo, wound infections, and infections of hair follicles. Less commonly, staph bacteria can get into the bloodstream and other body sites and cause severe illness.

People may be “colonized” with staph bacteria in their nose or on their skin. This means that the bacteria are there without causing any infection or any harm.

If your child is infected, the time it will take for symptoms to start will vary by type of infection.

Spread

- By touching skin drainage or pus.
- By touching hands, objects, or surfaces contaminated with secretions from the nose.

Contagious period

As long as the infection or colonization is present. A child who has draining infections has more bacteria and is more contagious than a child who is only colonized.

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Call your health care provider

- If anyone in your home has symptoms. Your doctor will decide if treatment is needed.
- If your child has a wound that becomes larger and is not healing.

Prevention

- Wear disposable gloves when changing bandages. Wash hands after you touch any draining sores or change bandages. Your child may need help with handwashing.
- Keep wounds clean, dry, and covered with a bandage. Put used bandages in a plastic bag, close the plastic bag, and put it in the trash.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as washcloths, bar soap, combs, razors, or clothing.
- If possible, people with staph infections should do their own first aid on cuts/scrapes.
- Keep contaminated laundry separate from other laundry. Wash clothes, bed sheets, and blankets in hot water with detergent and dry in a hot dryer.
- Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces or objects. Use a disinfectant that kills *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria.

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