



Staph Infection Awareness (Re-issue DB 14-212)

Members are reminded of a significant problem with a strain of Staphylococcus Aureus that is resistant to several antibiotics. It is called Methicillin-Resistant Staph Aureus (MRSA). You likely have heard of this in the media. It has been associated with community settings where poor hygiene and close contact are typical: fitness facilities, day care centers, homeless shelters, correctional facilities as well as among athletic teams. Individuals with chronic illnesses such as diabetes, drug abusers and the homeless can be especially vulnerable. As with other types of staph, even healthy people can become colonized (carrier, but not infected) or infected and transmit the bacteria. The bacteria can survive on contaminated surfaces for days or weeks. Personal items such as razors, towels, bedding, etc. can be a source of transmission.

The infection is usually on the skin and often is dismissed as a pimple, an ingrown hair or a spider bite. It may develop quickly. In some cases, it appears like a boil, a rash or cellulites. Most cases are easily treated with antibiotics: in rare instances, staph can cause blood, bone or lung infections.

Officers should take the following precautions on or off the job and particularly when encountering individuals who may have a skin infection or when in settings such as fitness facilities:

- Use disposable gloves (nitrile) available in the Personal Protection Kits (PPE).
- Remove gloves before touching your face, skin or contaminating surfaces.
- Wash your hands with hot soapy water after any encounter and after removing gloves AND before touching your face or your skin.
- Utilize alcohol-based hand sanitizers when soap and water is not available.
- Clean surfaces that may be contaminated with disinfectant wipes.
- Always clean, protect, and cover any minor abrasions/cuts in your skin.
- Complete SFPD form 348 - Report of Contact with Contagious Disease if contact occurred on the job. Supervisors should be reminded to fill out the appropriate documentations (SFPD form 439, DWC form 1, & CA 5020).

In addition, when there is a report of a Staph infection the following steps shall be followed:

1. All officers must report to their supervisor regarding skin infection or boil as soon as possible or go directly to seek medical care.
2. For clean-up details, supervisors, shall contact the Facilities Unit at (415) 837-7260 during business hours and the Department Operations Center at (415) 553-1071 after business hours.
3. Before returning to work from MRSA infections, all officers will be seen by the SFPD Police Physician, Dr. Richard Martin at (415) 837-7226.

If you have any questions, contact the Medical Liaison Unit at (415) 837-7222, or the Injury and Illness Prevention Program Coordinator at (415) 837-7225.

Airport Bureau – Clean up detail for facilities or vehicles during normal business hours, contact the facilities officer at (650) 821-7050 and after hours, contact the shift equipment officer.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'William Scott'.
WILLIAM SCOTT
Chief of Police