

October 31, 2007

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Reporting of MRSA (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) infections has become more common locally, in New York State and other areas of the country recently. MRSA is a type of staph infection that is resistant to a certain class of antibiotics. Community-associated MRSA (CA-MRSA) has been a growing concern for schools as well. These are MRSA infections that occur in healthy people who have not been hospitalized or had a medical procedure in the past year. When left untreated, CA-MRSA can progress to serious complications.

Twenty-five to thirty percent of the population carry staph bacteria on their skin and noses without causing infection. Infections can start when staph bacteria get into a cut, scrape or other break in the skin. Most of these skin infections are minor and can easily be treated without an antibiotic; although, some staph bacterium can cause more serious infections that require more aggressive treatment. CA-MRSA infections typically begin as skin infections. They first appear as reddened areas on the skin, or can resemble pimples that develop into skin abscesses or boils causing pain, pus, swelling or pain. Any of these signs warrant medical attention.

The Hudson Falls Central School District is following the guidelines from the *Health Advisory* issued by the New York State Department of Health and the New York State Education Department, "***Prevention of Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) Infections in the School Setting.***" This document may be found on our District webpage [www.hfcsd.org](http://www.hfcsd.org). Our District is also working closely with our School Physician, Dr. Joel Solomon and Washington County Public Health Officials in monitoring for Staph and CA-MRSA infections.

There are simple measures to prevent or minimize the risk of Staph and MRSA infection in school:

1. Keep hands clean by washing thoroughly with soap and water on a regular basis.
2. Practice good skin care. Keep skin healthy and intact.
3. Wash any cut or break in the skin with soap and water and apply a clean bandage until healed.
4. Avoid sharing personal items such as towels, clothing or equipment.
5. Report any breaks in skin and/or known skin infections to the Health Office.

Please refer to our webpage for comprehensive information on MRSA [www.hfcsd.org](http://www.hfcsd.org). If you have any questions or concerns regarding this notice, please contact Michelle Burke, School Nurse-Teacher at 747-2121 ext. 4218.

Sincerely,

Mark E. Doody