

MRSA Outbreak

An outbreak of MRSA is an increase in the rate of MRSA cases or a clustering of new cases. The definition of cases encompasses both newly infected and colonized patients. An increase in the case rate can be defined statistically or experimentally (refer to Table 3).

TABLE 3. Definition of Increased Case Rate
A statistical definition using the incidence or incidence density ratio (number of new cases per 100 admissions/time or per 100 patient-days)
An experimental definition on the basis of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly case rate increase of 25% above the baseline • Increased number of new nosocomial cases compared with similarly-sized hospitals (Refer to Table 2 in AJIC 26: 102-110 April 1998) • One case per month in a high-risk unit* or unit previously without cases • Three or more new nosocomial cases per month in any unit
*High-risk unit: Intensive care, neonatal intensive care, burn or dialysis units.

Consult with infection control practitioners or infectious disease physicians if an outbreak situation occurs.

Reference:

1. Wenzel, et al. *Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus Outbreak; A Consensus Panel's Definition and Management Guidelines*. American Journal of Infection Control 1998; 26:102-110.