

## Other blood borne viruses

### Hepatitis C and Hepatitis B

are both viruses which can inflame and damage the liver.

### HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus)

damages your immune system affecting the body's ability to fight infection / disease.

### Did you know?

- Free Hepatitis B vaccinations are available
- There is a new Hepatitis C treatment – no more interferon
- HIV treatment has become much more successful, but it's vital that you are tested early, so that you get the right treatments at the right time

**Ask us how you can get tested for MRSA and blood borne viruses.**

# MRSA

## Talk to us about how you can prevent infection

**If you inject drugs you are at risk of contracting MRSA, which can cause serious illness or death if left untreated.**



**There are 2 main types of infection that can get into your body when you inject drugs: bacteria and viruses.**

- Bacteria live on the skin and on all other surfaces eg MRSA
- Viruses live in cells and can be carried in the blood eg Hepatitis B and C and HIV.

**MRSA is a bacteria. If it enters your bloodstream MRSA can make you very ill and can cause death if not treated.**

MRSA is a bacterial infection which has become resistant to some antibiotics. It can affect people in hospital AND in the community.

It can cause serious infections if it enters your bloodstream. This can happen when you inject anything into your veins or if you have a wound. It can be passed from person to person through injecting equipment including needles, spoons, filters, tourniquets and syringes. It can also be passed via hands and contaminated surfaces.

**If it enters your bloodstream MRSA can make you very ill and can cause death if not treated.**

The following groups of people are at higher risk:

- People who inject drugs
- People who have open wounds, abscesses or ulcers
- People who have previously had the MRSA infection



**You can reduce the risk of infection by:**

- Washing your hands with soap and water before injecting drugs
- Cleaning injection sites with antiseptic wipes
- Using new needles and equipment every time you inject, never share
- Keeping wounds covered

**Ask to be tested for MRSA. It is just a simple swab test and if you have it you can be easily treated with nasal ointment and medicated skin wash.**

If you have any of these symptoms:

- Wound redness
- Muscle aches
- Fever

**Seek medical advice as soon as you can.**

**You can call NHS 111 for confidential advice.**