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**Lab Dept:** Microbiology/Virology

**Test Name:** MRSA SCREEN

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***General Information***

**Lab Order Codes:** MRSS

**Synonyms:** Screen for MRSA; Culture, MRSA Only; Culture, Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* Only; Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* Culture; MRSA Culture

**CPT Codes:** 87081 – Culture, presumptive, pathogenic organisms, screening only

The following testing may be added if appropriate based on findings for organism identification (multiple additions are possible if more than one organism is identified).

87077 – Aerobic isolate, additional methods required for definitive identification, each isolate (if appropriate)

87184 – Susceptibility studies, disk method, per plate (if appropriate)

87186 – Susceptibility studies, microdilution or agar dilution, each multi-antimicrobial, per plate (if appropriate)

**Test Includes:** Culture and identification of Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) only.

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***Logistics***

**Lab Testing Sections:** Microbiology

**Phone Numbers:** MIN Lab: 612-813-5866

STP Lab: 651-220-6555

**Test Availability:** Daily, 24 hours

**Turnaround Time:** Results are reported within 3 days.

**Special Instructions:** **Specimen site** and **date/time of collection** are required for processing.

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***Specimen***

**Specimen Type:** Anterior nares, rectum or other appropriate source

**Container:** Swab transport medium

**Collection:****Anterior Nares:**

1. Insert swab, pre-moistened with sterile saline, approximately 2 cm into the nares.
2. Rotate the swab against the nasal mucosa.
3. Place in swab transport medium.

**Rectal Swab:**

1. Insert swab approximately 1 inch into anal canal.
2. Gently move the swab from side to side to sample the anal crypts.
3. If fecal contamination occurs, discard swab and use another to obtain specimen.
4. Place in swab transport medium.

**Transport/Storage:**

Onsite collections: Transport to the laboratory immediately.

Offsite collections: Refrigerate specimen. Specimens must be promptly transported to the laboratory, with the next available courier, not to exceed 24 hours from the time of collection. However, delayed transport causes a delay of test results.

**Sample Rejection:**

Improperly labeled specimen; specimens with prolonged transit time (see [Transport/Storage](#) for requirements); specimen not submitted in appropriate transport container; insufficient volume; external contamination. If an unacceptable specimen is received, the physician or nursing station will be notified and another specimen will be requested before the specimen is discarded.

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***Interpretive*****Reference Range:**

No Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) isolated.

**Alert Value:**

Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* isolated.

A physician or nurse caregiver will be notified of the initial positive result. Repeat positive screens, or patients already in MRSA Contact Precautions will not be phoned.

**Methodology:**

Culture

**References:**

Cook, JH, and M Pezzlo (1992). Specimen receipt and accessioning. Section 1. Aerobic bacteriology, 1.2.1-4. In HD Isenberg (ed) Clinical Microbiology Procedures Handbook. American Society for Microbiology, Washington DC

Miller, J Michael (1999) A Guide To Specimen Management in Clinical Microbiology, American Society for Microbiology, Washington DC

Miller, J Michael, and HT Holmes (1999) Specimen Collection, Transport, and Storage In PR Murray et al, (ed), Manual of Clinical Microbiology, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, American Society for Microbiology, Washington DC, pp 33-104

**Updates:**

12/13/2004: Collection directions for NP swabs under Collection were replaced with directions for Anterior Nares specimens.

8/13/2005: Infection Control will no longer be notified with positive results for this procedure.

3/24/2010: CPT Updates

2/20/2012: Changed from Critical value to Significant finding.

6/20/2012: Significant finding changed to Alert Value.

11/20/2014: Offsite information added.