

Severe *Staphylococcus aureus* Infections Now Reportable by Healthcare Providers

Effective July 1, 2008, severe *Staphylococcus aureus* infections in previously healthy persons resulting in death or admission to an intensive care unit are immediately reportable from healthcare providers to local health departments (LHD). A previously healthy person is defined as one who has not been hospitalized or had surgery, dialysis, or residency in a long-term care facility in the past year and did not have an indwelling catheter or percutaneous medical device at the time of culture. Infection with either methicillin-sensitive or methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MSSA or MRSA) is reportable if the patient meets the case definition. A case of toxic shock syndrome (TSS) due to *Staphylococcus aureus* shall continue to be reported under TSS and not under this new case category.

Public health surveillance for these severe *Staphylococcus aureus* cases will help identify the types of community-associated *Staphylococcus aureus* infections, including MRSA infections, which cause the most concern to the public and health officials. Examples of severe illness syndromes caused by *Staphylococcus aureus* include invasive skin and soft-tissue infection, necrotizing fasciitis, musculoskeletal infection (pyomyositis, osteomyelitis), severe pneumonia, empyema, necrotizing pneumonia, disseminated infections with septic emboli, bacteremia, and sepsis syndrome. Surveillance data will identify populations at risk for severe community-associated *Staphylococcus aureus* infections and provide additional information that could be used in planning prevention and control measures.

When a case of severe *Staphylococcus aureus* infection in a previously healthy person meets the surveillance case definition, healthcare providers shall immediately notify the LHD of the case and submit a completed Confidential Report of Communicable Diseases, State Form 43823. The LHD shall then submit a separate case investigation report, State Form 53653 (6-08) and will need to follow up with local healthcare providers for additional information.

Information on MRSA and links to other resources are provided at <http://www.in.gov/isdh/22122.htm>