**Purpose:**

To provide essential information about Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) infection, including its symptoms, prevention, and treatment measures. This document aims to educate patients, visitors, and healthcare providers on how to prevent the spread of MRSA and ensure effective care and safety within the hospital environment.

**Procedures:**

**Understanding MRSA:**

1. **Definition:**
   * Staphylococcus aureus (Staph) is a common germ found on the skin or in the nose. MRSA is a type of Staph that is resistant to many antibiotics.
   * Can cause serious infections such as skin or wound infections, pneumonia, or infections of the blood.

**Who is at Risk:**

1. **In the Hospital:**
   * People with other health conditions
   * Hospitalized patients or those in nursing homes
   * Patients treated with antibiotics
2. **Outside the Hospital:**
   * Healthy individuals can also get MRSA, usually involving skin infections. More information is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at <http://www.cdc.gov/mrsa>.

**Transmission:**

1. **Spread:**
   * MRSA can be spread via contaminated surfaces (bed linens, bed rails, bathroom fixtures, medical equipment) and through direct contact with infected individuals or healthcare providers.

**Treatment:**

1. **Options:**
   * There are antibiotics that can kill MRSA.
   * Some patients may need surgery to drain infections. Treatment is determined by healthcare providers.

**Prevention Measures in Hospitals:**

1. **Hygiene:**
   * Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before and after caring for patients.
   * Carefully clean hospital rooms and medical equipment.
2. **Contact Precautions:**
   * Isolate patients with MRSA or share rooms only with other MRSA patients.
   * Healthcare providers wear gloves and gowns when caring for MRSA patients.
   * Visitors may also be asked to wear gloves and gowns.
   * Clean hands before leaving the room and remove gloves and gowns.
   * Patients should stay in their hospital rooms as much as possible and avoid common areas.
3. **Testing:**
   * Some patients may be tested for MRSA by swabbing the nostrils or skin.

**Patient Guidance:**

1. **Hospital Stay:**
   * Ensure healthcare providers clean their hands before and after caring for you.
   * If you have wounds or an intravascular device, ensure proper care.
2. **After Discharge:**
   * Continue taking prescribed antibiotics as directed.
   * Clean hands often, especially before and after changing wound dressings.
   * Household members should also clean their hands frequently.
   * Keep wounds clean and change bandages as instructed until healed.
   * Avoid sharing personal items like towels or razors.
   * Wash and dry clothes and bed linens at recommended temperatures.
   * Inform healthcare providers that you have MRSA.

**Visitor Guidelines:**

1. **Reducing Risk:**
   * Visitors should clean their hands before and after visiting.
   * Visitors should ask healthcare providers if they need to wear protective gowns and gloves.

**Additional Instructions:**

1. **Doctor's Advice:**
   * Follow any additional instructions provided by your doctor.