

Eliminating Staph From Your Skin

Staph bacteria (*staphylococcus aureus*) are normally found on the skin or in the nose of about one-third of the population. If you have staph on your skin or in your nose but aren't sick, you are said to be "colonized" but not "infected" with staph. Healthy people can be colonized with staph and have no ill effects. However, they can pass the germ to others.

Staph bacteria can enter the body through a wound or a disrupted hair follicle. When a hair follicle becomes infected it can cause a "boil" (a giant pustule) or folliculitis (those tiny pustules that you get on your thighs or buttocks or elsewhere). People who keep getting these types of infections must take steps to eliminate the staph bacteria that is colonizing their skin.

HOW YOU DO IT

5 Day Regimen

- Gargle with **Listerine** DAILY
- Soak toothbrushes and comb/hair brushes in **Listerine** (or just use new disposable comb/toothbrush) DAILY
- Wipe all surfaces with **disinfectant wipes** DAILY
- **Wash** underwear, towel, linens DAILY
- Use **hand disinfectant** several times DAILY
- Do a "**bleach bath**" (dilute ¼ cup of Clorox into ½ tub of water – soak for 10 minutes DAILY)
- Apply a small amount of **ointment or cream** just inside your nostrils, behind your ears, and in your belly button **2x** DAILY
 - You can buy **Triple Antibiotic Ointment** (or use the **prescription cream** prescribed for this)
- *(Repeat this regimen each month as part of "Maintenance Regimen" below)*

10 Day Regimen (if staph infection recurs)

- See doctor to treat it
- Repeat the "5 day regimen" above for **10** days this time
- Consider at least **Hibiclens** for partners/children (see "Maintenance Regimen" below)
- Follow with "Maintenance Regimen" below

Maintenance Regimen

- Use **Hibiclens or chlorhexidine wash** as a body wash DAILY
 - Use it especially on body parts that you would expect to harbor bacteria – feet, underarms, groin, buttocks
 - Hibiclens is an antibacterial soap similar to what surgeons scrub with
 - You can find it in the "first aid" section of the pharmacy
- Have **everyone** who lives with you use the **Hibiclens or chlorhexidine wash** as a body wash **3x** a week
 - (this also goes for boyfriends or girlfriends who do not live with you)
 - Do not share bars of soap (better yet, get rid of the bar soap altogether and use liquid soap from now on).
 - Throw away any old sponges or loofahs in the shower.
- *(Repeat the 5 Day Regimen above each month)*

WHY YOU DO IT

The hibiclens will cleanse your skin of most colonizing bacteria. Your housemates and significant others must also wash with hibiclens because they may be "colonized" but not infected with staph. So if they do not cleanse their skin, they may keep reinfesting you.

The cream or ointment in the nostrils etc... is to kill the bacteria in areas where it typically hides (and where hibiclens may not reach).