

Natural Medicine and the Treatment of Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus – MRSA

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A normal bacterium found on the body, Staphylococcus aureus, has developed into a deadly warrior against current antibiotic treatment. Hospitals and extended care facilities have become unwitting breeding houses of Methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus where patients and caregivers are desperate to find a solution to these resistant bacteria. Treatment with natural therapies is proving to be more effective than conventional treatment.

Methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) is a bacterium that has become resistant to antibiotic therapy, the mainstay in medicine for treatment of infections. Resistance has occurred because of excessive use of antimicrobial cleaning agents and antibiotic therapy, especially in hospital and extended care facilities. Therefore, individuals infected, have no line of defense except for their own immune systems against MRSA. If, for whatever reason, the person's immune system is functioning at a lower level, MRSA can induce considerable morbidity, eventually resulting in chronic debilitating illness or death.

Once the scourge of hospital and extended care facilities, MRSA has moved into the community at large and is now being seen in athletes and among children in school following injuries that break the skin. Risk factors for developing MRSA are hospitalization, residence in a long-term care facility, chronic lung, vascular or liver disease, patients on dialysis, malignancy, and prolonged exposure to antibiotics. However, healthy friends and family members who visit their loved ones in hospitals and extended care facility are now also susceptible to MRSA.

An infection with S. aureus can occur anywhere. Skin and soft tissues are commonly seen, but respiratory tract, urinary tract, and endovascular infections are also found. Additionally, S. aureus is one of the most common infective organisms found with osteomyelitis, and infection of bone tissue in children as well as adults. This usually occurs because the organism has passed through the blood and set up house keeping there or the site has become infected following a fracture or surgery for a hip or knee replacement. Staphylococcus aureus infections have been linked to Toxic Shock Syndrome, Staphylococcal Scalded Skin Syndrome, food poisoning, and infections following sinusitis or soft tissue infections of the face.

Natural therapies such as herbal medicines, homeopathy, hydrotherapy, oxygen therapy and macronutrients have been used clinically to fight MRSA infections. They mainly enhance immune system function but also possess antibacterial properties that antibiotics do not, thus making them more effective against S. aureus and MRSA. Herbal medicines such as Echinacea, Goldenseal, Myrrh, Berberis, Phytolacca, Astragalus and others do not attack microorganisms by one method only but possess multiple methods of attack. These range from actual germicidal activities to preparing S. aureus for attack by T and B lymphocytes (opsonization), and providing specific binding sites on the organism for the binding of complement and immunoglobulins. Taken altogether, no microorganism has demonstrated the capacity to mutate to such an extent as to overcome a multi-pronged attack, which is why herbal medicines have an excellent track record against S. aureus and MRSA. When used in conjunction with other therapies such as homeopathy, macronutrient therapy or hydrotherapy, their effectiveness increases considerably.

Natural therapeutics for treatment of S. aureus and MRSA while effective, require longer periods of time in order to be successful. This is simply because they act to stimulate the body's own healing mechanisms by requiring proper nutrition and stimulation of an often depleted immune system. Once accomplished, the patient ends up with a stronger immune system that is better able to fight off microorganisms like S. aureus and MSRA.

Rockwood Natural Medicine Clinic (RNMC) is a naturopathic family practice facility. RNMC was founded in 1991 as a primary care/family practice clinic in Portland, Oregon with a mission was to provide safe, sensible and effective natural medicine for the entire family. In 2000 RNMC relocated the clinic to sunny Scottsdale, Arizona where it is a model for students and physicians to attain further education. Dr. Thomas Kruzel and Dr. Robyn Conte are dedicated to educating and training the next generation of healthcare providers. For more information about RNMC, please visit www.rockwoodnaturalmedicine.com.

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