

MRSA, the "SuperBug"

Media Hype May Be Causing Unnecessary Panic

News stories of an insidious "SuperBug" bacterial infection known as MRSA (an acronym for *Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus*) have dominated the media in recent months. Reports that the bacteria had made its way into schools around the area have struck fear in parents' hearts, and prompted public outcry for wide scale sanitation efforts. But as Dr. Robin Scheiner explains, the media hype may be causing unnecessary panic.

"Recent media coverage may have been somewhat irresponsible in referring to MRSA as some kind of deadly new super bug," says Dr. Scheiner. "The reality is really much different, and dermatologists around the country are working hard to educate the public about the facts of MRSA."

What is MRSA?

Some information reported in the media is, in fact, true:

MRSA is an antibiotic resistant "staph" bacteria that grows in clusters, multiplies very rapidly and can cause many different kinds of infection, ranging from simple skin infections (boils, furuncles) to septicemia (infection of the bloodstream). There have been some isolated reports of MRSA causing toxic shock syndrome, but those cases are very rare.

Although staph aureus bacteria are found on the skin or in the nose of about one-third of the population, most people are never affected by it. In healthy people, staph aureus bacteria that enter the body through a cut or wound cause only minor skin problems. (Staph epidermidis are found on the skin of 100% of the population but never cause infection.)

Some staph bacteria, like Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus*



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"Red Carpet" Dermatology

West Coast Doctors Keep Busy During Awards Season

'Tis the season of award shows, when we are riveted to our TV sets to find out not only which actors and actresses are recognized for their work this year, but also, what they are wearing and how they look when they walk the red carpet.

While the continued strike of the Writers Guild of America has cast a shadow over this awards season, there is still enough faith that the show WILL go on that stars are going about their normal pre-award show routines. The dress...the tux...the hair style...the skin care treatments.

Yes, for most celebrities, preparing for the red carpet includes multiple trips to their dermatologist. As reported by the *New York Times* (Feb. '07), the Hollywood award show season is among the busiest times for the doctors responsible for the care of celebrity skin.

"Whoever is going to walk down that red carpet - actor, spouse, mother, sister - they all want to look like the burnished statuettes on the podium," said Dr. Ava T. Shamban, a Santa Monica dermatologist who treats many celebrity patients. "They all want to look nice, smooth, glowing, untouched by woe and by time."

With the glare of the spotlight on them - not to mention cameras from around the world - celebrities know they need to look their best, from head to toe.

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Radiesse™

A "Volumizer" to Restore Youthful Appearance

There are many wonderful fillers on the market to handle fine lines and wrinkles on the face, including Juvéderm, Restylane and Perlane. But deeper folds and wrinkles call for a different approach, and AMCD is pleased to now offer an ideal solution: Radiesse.

Radiesse is a calcium-based filler that is used to add volume back to the skin, which "plumps" up the application area and smoothes out deep folds and wrinkles in the skin. It is particularly effective on deep nasolabial folds (the "parenthesis" that run from the nose to either side of the mouth) and marionette lines (which run from the corners of the mouth to the chin).

In addition, AMCD has seen promising results when using Radiesse for hand rejuvenation. "When people age, they lose fat on the backs of their hands," explains Dr. Scheiner. "For that reason, the bones and veins of the hands become more prominent. As a filler, Radiesse takes the place of the fat and plumps the skin back to where it was originally so the bones, veins and wrinkles are less prominent." (see before and after photos)

Here's How it Works:

Radiesse is made of unique calcium-based microspheres that are suspended in a water-based gel and injected into the skin through a simple, safe, and minimally invasive procedure.

Unlike other fillers, it is injected into the subcutaneous fat **under** the skin, instead of directly in the **skin**.

Radiesse stimulates the body to produce new collagen, which naturally increases volume in the treatment area and corrects facial wrinkles and folds.

Though your body will absorb the gel carrier over time, collagen will start to grow and infiltrate the area in the meantime, thus replacing the gel with your own collagen. Radiesse continues to stimulate the body to produce new collagen until the microspheres are all safely and naturally absorbed into your body.

The other outstanding feature of Radiesse is that it offers long-lasting results, as much as one to two years. 📺

Benefits of Radiesse

- FDA-APPROVED wrinkle treatment used to correct moderate to severe facial wrinkles and folds.
- Works to naturally stimulate the body to produce **NEW COLLAGEN**.
- Radiesse dermal filler is **LONG LASTING**.
- Provides **IMMEDIATE** correction through a convenient treatment that can be performed during your lunch hour!
- May require **LESS FREQUENT** office visits for re-treatments, saving you time and money.
- Is **BIOCOMPATIBLE**, and no allergy testing is necessary prior to treatment

Before

After



"Skin Savvy" Newsletter Special

Present this coupon and receive **10% off** your first

Radiesse™ Treatment

Valid through March 31, 2008



But thanks to the relentless scrutiny (and critical eye) of paparazzi, gossip magazines, entertainment shows, and Internet sites (including www.awfulplasticsurgery.com, TMZ and YouTube), more celebrities are opting for more natural and less dramatic procedures. Thus the term, Red Carpet Dermatology.

What is Red Carpet Dermatology?

Red carpet dermatology involves scalpel-free procedures that create more temporary and potentially less detectable changes than cosmetic surgery solutions. These include a wide array of cosmetic dermatology treatments such as Botox injections to smooth out wrinkles, dermal fillers to plump lips and facial creases, or lasers for brown spots and broken blood vessels.

Los Angeles dermatologist Dr. Jessica Wu said she has been working seven days a week for the last month ministering to actresses, agents and producers in her office and on movie sets, as well as making house calls. But she explains, "More celebrities are coming in for smaller procedures because they know that every inch of skin they show on the red carpet is going to be scrutinized."

None of the doctors interviewed for the *New York Times* article would name their celebrity clients because such a disclosure could constitute a violation of doctor-patient confidentiality. But they were willing to discuss in general terms the cosmetic treatments that are particularly popular in their practices during awards season.

Dr. Wu said an actor's grooming process might begin a month before an awards ceremony. She recommends that some celebrities undergo what she calls a "Botox neck lift" about two weeks before an awards show. This involves injecting the jaw line and neck to relax muscles underneath the skin, she said.

"It temporarily gives you a sharper jaw line and a longer neck, which looks good if you are wearing a strapless gown or a low-cut dress," Dr. Wu explained. "And it's not likely to land the actress on the cover of *In Touch* with a headline like: 'Did She Have Surgery?'"


Up to one week before an event, Dr. Shamban said, she administers injections of temporary fillers like Restylane, a gel made out of hyaluronic acid, to pad lips and invert crow's feet. This week, she said, she will also give "superamped facials" to a few awards-goers; the facials involve a chemical peel or macrodermabrasion to exfoliate the top layer of skin cells, followed by an application of a moisturizing serum.

"If skin is hydrated, it plumps up more and looks glowing," Dr. Shamban said. "It should last through a whole night of partying."

Plan ahead for Your "Red Carpet Event"

Whether you are a celebrity, a bride-to-be or someone planning to attend a big high school reunion, AMCD's Dr. Boucher cautioned that it's important to plan ahead. "Many cosmetic dermatology procedures require more than one session to produce the best results. Plus, certain procedures can cause some slight bruising, swelling or skin irritation," she explains. "You will want to give yourself ample time for these side effects to subside before your big event."

Better yet, strive to look your best all the time. "You don't need a special event to have an excuse to improve or enhance your appearance," says Dr. Hostetler. "Men and women today have many options for keeping their skin youthful and healthy looking.

It helps build their confidence in both their personal and professional life." 



Most Popular "Red Carpet Dermatology" Procedures

Macrodermabrasion: This procedure gently polishes the skin with the healing and restorative powers of salt. Reduces the appearance of enlarged pores, fine lines, wrinkles and uneven skin tone.

Chemical Peels combined with a Series of Facials: In combination with a light to medium chemical peel (see story on page 5 for an overview of AMCD's chemical peels), many celebrities opt for a series of nourishing facials to bring out the best in their skin.

Dermal Fillers, such as Restylane and Juvederm, to plump lips, fill marionette lines, soften cheek hollows. Best done several weeks prior to allow for spontaneous reduction in injection-induced swelling and/or bruising.

Botox injections to forehead wrinkles and between the eyebrow frown lines. Like "fillers", best done several weeks prior to appearances to allow for full effect to emerge.

aureus or **MRSA**, are resistant to certain antibiotics in the penicillin family. This necessitates treatment with alternative antibiotics.

Dr. Scheiner explains that the medical community is well aware of how to treat MRSA since it was first detected in the 1960's. "It's true that these bacteria have developed a resistance to some antibiotics. But in an otherwise healthy person, MRSA infections normally clear up easily if treated promptly with other common, inexpensive antibiotics like a tetracycline or Bactrim."

MRSA, like TB and other infectious diseases, tends to proliferate in less than sanitary conditions and close living quarters such as hospitals and correctional facilities where germs may flourish in incubator-like circumstances. Staph bacteria live on surfaces and can be spread by sweat through skin-to-skin contact when germs get into the body from open cuts or scrapes.

A 2002 MRSA incident among prisoners, guards and family members at Bucks County Jail resulted in landmark settlements a few years later. Locally, there are similar pending lawsuits today in Bucks and Gloucester county facilities, and the occasional area school case which make the headlines. But, as Dr. Scheiner, explains, these are unfortunate cases – not outbreaks – and they're rare occurrences in the general public.

Signs, Symptoms and Treatment

Early detection is important. Minor skin irritations such as pimples, insect bites, cuts and scrapes should always be monitored. Staph infections, including MRSA, usually start as hardened, pimple-like red bumps with swelling, pain, abscess or sores that don't heal. If you notice these symptoms, you should seek medical treatment.

Your health care provider may drain the abscess and decide

if further treatment is needed. A simple culture may be taken to help determine the best antibiotic to prescribe. Drugs that treat ordinary staph aren't effective against MRSA.

In incidents of severe staph infection, family members should wear disposable gloves if they are helping in cleaning the area or with bandage changes. The infected person should avoid sharing towels, clothing or bedding with other family members until the infection is cleared. There is no need to "sterilize" the room.

MRSA pneumonia - a complication following influenza - can be fatal, especially in infants, the elderly or in patients who have other serious diseases that weaken their immune systems. But these instances are rare, as are the cases where staph bacteria that are treated properly get into the bloodstream and cause serious infections that can spread to lungs or joints.

Practicing Good Hygiene

In an effort to reduce MRSA and, for that matter, all skin infections, it's important that you and your family follow good hygiene practices in and out of the home.

Most precautions are pretty simple," says Dr. Scheiner. "The first and easiest thing is to always thoroughly wash your hands or, when that's not possible, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer."

Fighting skin infections, she says, is like fighting any illness or infection – you should boost your immune system by eating properly, and getting the right amount of exercise and sleep.

These simple steps, combined with factual education about health conditions like MRSA, are your best defense. And always feel free to talk to any member of AMCD's professional staff if you have any questions or concerns. 📞

Other Common Sense Precautions Against MRSA

- **Cover wounds.** Use dry, sterile bandages on cuts, scrapes and abrasions until they heal.
- **Never share personal items.** This includes objects like towels, razors, clothing and even sports equipment such as hand weights.
- **Create barriers.** Bring a clean towel or piece of clothing to place between your skin and surfaces like weight benches or gym mats which could be contaminated by the infected skin of a person with MRSA or another staph bacterium.
- **Shower after sports-related contact.** Clean off immediately after competitive sports or when in close contact with others.
- **Avoid Unnecessary Antibiotics.** Persistent, overuse of antibiotics can result in your body developing more resistant bacteria, leaving you with more limited options when you really need an antibiotic. Antibiotics should normally not be taken for colds or flu. If prescribed antibiotics, take only as directed. Don't share your medicine with others, and never save unused medicine for future use. If a particular antibiotic isn't working, call your health care provider after a few days to discuss further treatment.

Skincare Peels:

The right product can provide wonderful results for all types of skin conditions

Many people believe that the only type of chemical peel on the market is the kind that forces you into hiding while your face returns to its normal (but better) condition after weeks of being red and sensitive to light.

But in reality, there is a wide array of peels available today to treat a broad range of skin conditions.

Medical Aesthetician Charlotte Gallagher recently attended a conference put on by the International Congress of Esthetics, where she learned more about the benefits of chemical peels.

Here is a breakdown of the wonderful chemical peels offered by AMCD:

Seasonal Enzyme Peel/Blueberry Lactic Peel/Glycolic Acid Peel/Salicylic Acid Peel: These are all considered to be light peels (or “lunchtime peels”) that can be done in a half an hour, with little or no downtime. Our Medical Aestheticians will recommend an appropriate peel, based on the condition of your skin.

Benefit Peel: This is a powerful antioxidant peel which repairs, nourishes and protects. It is considered to be a light peel that delivers a blend of nourishing and stimulating ingredients to promote cell turnover.

Blueberry Jessner Peel: This is an exceptional acne drying treatment that also reduces fine lines and improves the appearance of mature changing skin.

Blueberry TCA Peel: This physician-administered medium depth peel is great for acne scarring, photodamage, fine lines and melasma. This is our deepest peel, but there is minimal downtime to recovery.

The Lasting Effects of Peels

For the best and longest lasting results, a chemical peel should be part of your ongoing skin regimen. Light peels usually need to be repeated every three to six months. The results of a medium peel will last about one year. When combined with the daily use of high quality serums, moisturizers and night creams (such as those from iS Clinical), the results will be satisfying! 📌

Did You Know That...?

- As a woman's income goes up, her interest in cosmetic dermatology procedures goes up as well? However, as a man's income goes up, his interest in appearance-oriented cosmetic procedures goes down? Interesting...



- The top cosmetic procedures for men are laser hair reduction and removal of brown spots? The top cosmetic procedures for women are microdermabrasion, laser hair reduction, removal of brown spots, Botox and dermal fillers.
- Studies have shown that one of the most important, but unreported, problems with prescribed topical medications for chronic skin conditions such as psoriasis and acne is that patients do not use the product consistently as directed. By planting microchips in the medicine cap, scientists have been able to prove that use of topical treatments drop dramatically after the first week of treatment, and then often rise again a few days before a scheduled appointment. Taking your medications as prescribed on a consistent basis is one of the most important steps in combating chronic skin conditions.



ACMD Online:

Check Out Our New, Improved Website!

In the Fall of 2007, AMCD launched a new and improved website, designed to place all the important details about our broad range of products and services at your fingertips, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

In addition to expanded sections on Medical and Cosmetic Dermatology services, the site features a special section on Men's Cosmetic Treatments (note to self: bookmark for husband/significant other!), and an archive of past **Skin Savvy** issues. You also have the opportunity to purchase gift certificates for AMCD products and services, and sign up for the e-newsletter version of **Skin Savvy**. There are also web-only special offers that feature discounts for our most popular cosmetic procedures.

Check it out at www.amcdonline.com and let us know what you think!



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iS Clinical Builds an International Reputation

AMCD continually reviews various skin care lines that come on the market to ensure that we are offering the best products to our patients. The iS Clinical line remains our favorite, with its exceptional ingredients and impressive results. The line uses powerful pharmaceutical-grade botanical acids, peptides, amino acids and other ingredients that promote cellular renewal and skin rejuvenation.

iS Clinical continues to draw the attention of major publications including *New Beauty*, *Hollywood Life*, *Essence*, *Vogue*, *Bazaar* and *Lucky*. And most recently, there was a glowing full page review of the iS Clinical line in the *London Times*!

We believe that its growing international reputation is well deserved. Please speak to one of our Medical Aestheticians about recommending a regimen of iS Clinical products customized for your skin type.



iS Clinical offers a full line of exceptional skin care products beneficial for all skin types.

Get **Skin Savvy** in e-mail form and take advantage of our online specials for products and services.

Sign up online at
www.amcdonline.com