

Section 14-10 – Talking Points for Nasal Iodophor

Patients may have questions regarding nasal iodophor. Below are some suggested responses to common patient questions.

REMEMBER: Your **enthusiasm** and **encouragement** will be the greatest predictors of a patient's acceptance of the protocol.

What is the purpose of the iodophor swab?

Our hospital provides a special iodine-based nose swab to all patients with medical devices who have methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), a type of bacteria that lives in the front of the nose. The purpose of the iodophor swab is to help get rid of bacteria in the nose such as MRSA, which can cause serious infections such as pneumonia, blood infections, and skin infections. An iodophor swab is applied to each nostril twice a day for 5 days to help protect you from infection. Iodophor is an over-the-counter product with 10% iodine. We will apply a swab to each nostril and rotate it around for 30 seconds, or at least three times around slowly, so it coats the inside of your nose and kills germs.

Why is nasal iodophor used for patients with devices?

Nasal decolonization has been shown to reduce infections in patients who have MRSA and have devices such as yours. Our hospital is committed to protecting you from infection and this is one proven strategy that we use.

Why are iodophor swabs used for patients who have MRSA?

MRSA can live in people's noses. Nasal iodophor helps clear MRSA from the nose so the bacteria don't go to other places on the body and cause infection. Large clinical trials have found that nasal decolonization reduces infections in patients who have MRSA and who also have various devices. Our hospital is committed to protecting you from infection and this is one proven strategy that we use.

Will the swab make my nose brown?

Surprisingly, it really doesn't. It may leave a brown tinge just at the edge that you can dab off with a tissue. Here is a tissue for you to hold. Just dab the rim, but don't blow your nose since we want the iodophor to coat the inside of the nose and kill germs.

I have received mupirocin in the past. Do I have to have iodophor now?

Yes. A single course of mupirocin or iodophor protects you while you use it, but does not guarantee that MRSA is gone forever. Our hospital practice is to give nasal iodophor decolonization to every patient with certain devices who also has a history of MRSA. We do this during every hospital stay that you have a device. We want you to be protected every time you are in this hospital.

I just finished using nasal swabs in the ICU. Do I have to have it again?

Yes. The nasal swabs don't provide permanent protection. We want to protect you the entire time you are here. Germs in the nose can often come back, and we want to ensure that you are protected from infection while you are in this hospital.

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