

Staphylococcus decolonisation

What is decolonisation treatment?

Recurrent staph infections occur when you pick up a certain 'strain' of staph that is prone to causing recurrent infections. Decolonisation is a treatment that aims to remove this problematic strain of staph from your body.

How does it work?

Staph tends to live up the nose and on the surface of the skin. It can also live on surfaces and objects around the house that have been touched. Decolonisation focuses on trying to get rid of staph from all three of these places at once, so that it doesn't have a chance to continue to spread backwards and forwards between them.

You, and everyone living in your house, should do the treatment at the same time. Other people in your house may carry the same strain of staph as you, but not show any signs of infection. If they are not decolonised at the same time they can give the staph back to you after your treatment, which would mean you are back at square one.

Who should do decolonisation?

Decolonisation can be difficult to achieve. Getting your skin in good condition is always the top priority for preventing recurrent infections, but if you've done this and you are still getting too many staph infections then decolonisation is sometimes recommended. You should only attempt it if you think you can very closely follow the instructions.

Decolonisation is not recommended if either of the following apply, because it is extremely unlikely to work:

- You, or other people in your household, have ongoing areas of broken skin e.g. eczema, dermatitis, boils that are still healing
- You live in a household with lots of other people

Seven Day Decolonisation Instructions

The entire process takes **7 days**, and should be done by everyone in the household. The aim is to get rid of the staph bacteria from:

1. Your nose
2. Your skin
3. Common places in your home environment where it can live

Do this every day	1. Apply supplied nasal ointment to both nostrils twice per day. Use a cotton bud to apply it around the whole inside surface of each nostril, going in about 1 cm. 2. Use an antiseptic skin cleanser in place of soap in the shower each day.* a. You are aiming to cover your entire body with this. b. You should turn the shower off for 2 minutes to allow it to work. c. Moisturise afterwards to prevent skin drying. Avoid cross contamination with moisturisers by starting the week with a new bottle (avoid using tubs that you dip your fingers into as you can contaminate the moisturiser in the tub) and do not share it between household members. 3. Fresh towels and clothing each day. a. Preferably washed in a hot wash with normal detergent b. Or, can use cold wash and dry in the sun or dryer
Do this on day 1 and then again on day 6	Clean the environment: 1. Wash all bedding. 1. Preferably use a hot wash with normal detergent. 2. Or, can use a cold wash and dry in the sun or dryer. 2. Thorough household clean. 1. Especially in bedrooms and bathrooms.
*If you can't use antiseptic skin cleanser in the shower, do this on day 1 and again on day 4	1. Bleach bath 1. See separate instructions. 2. This can be easier for children than using antiseptic skin cleanser 3. Moisturise afterwards, as per instructions above.

Attribution: Senior Medical Experts (SMEs) Capital & Coast DHB and Hutt Valley DHB.