

TITLE: PREVALENCE AND RESISTANT PROFILE OF *STAPHYLOCOCCUS AUREUS* ISOLATED FROM NURSING STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT:

Staphylococcus aureus is considered the main etiologic agent of nosocomial and community infections. This bacterium belongs to the group of gram-positive cocci, and can be easily found in the skin or nasal mucosa of healthy people. The body localization facilitate its dissemination in the community and in hospital environments. Most studies aiming *S. aureus* isolation and antibiotic resistance characterization were conducted only with health professionals, such as physicians, nurses or pharmacists. However, the students who attend the hospital rarely participate of these studies. They are inexperienced population and may more easily transmit *S. aureus* to the patients, including the multiresistant strains. This was cross-sectional study conducted with nursing students from a Brazilian University. Samples were collected from volunteers' nooses and isolation of *S. aureus* were performed on manitol salt agar plates. The identification of the isolates were done by Gram stain, catalase, coagulase and DNase probes. The antimicrobial susceptibility test (AST) was carried by Kirby and Bauer method according to the CLSI (Institute of Clinical and Laboratory Standards). A prevalence of 39.09% of *S. aureus* was observed, which corroborates with values found in similar studies among undergraduate nursing students. For susceptibility to antibiotics, 2% of the isolates showed resistance to oxacillin, 13.5% to tetracycline, 13.5% to ciprofloxacin, 7.7% to amoxicillin and clavulanic acid, 2% to norfloxacin, 44% azithromycin and 48% erythromycin. 48% of the strains has shown resistance to only one antibiotic and 21,15% presented resistance to three or more antibiotics, which classified them as multiresistant strains. Thus, a high prevalence of students colonized by multiresistant *S. aureus* was detected, attracting attention of the health entities, due to the frequent contact of these students with hospitalized patients.

Palavras chaves: *Staphylococcus aureus*; Nursing students; Multiresistance.