Screening for staph is simple. We rub a cotton swab against the inside of your nose. Then, it only takes a few days for the results to come back from the lab.
A positive test does not mean you have an infection, and we will not cancel or delay your surgery.

How do we screen for staph?
We rub a cotton swab against the inside of your nose, and then send the swab to the laboratory. It takes a few days for the test results to come back.

What if my test is positive?
If your test is positive for staph, a nurse will call you to explain how to use a special ointment and soap to help prevent a staph infection after surgery. You will need to:

1. Apply the nasal ointment (____________________) twice a day for _____ days before the date of your surgery.
2. Bathe or shower with a special soap (_______________________) the night before your surgery.

What is staph?
Staphylococcus aureus (staph) is a type of bacteria commonly found on the skin and inside the noses of many healthy people. Most of the time, skin protects the body and staph does not cause any problems. Since surgery requires an incision (cut) into the skin, staph can get into the incision and cause infection.

There are two kinds of staph:
1. Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus or MRSA is type of staph that is resistant to some antibiotics commonly used to treat staph infections.
2. Methicillin-Sensitive Staphylococcus aureus or MSSA is type of staph that is not resistant to antibiotics commonly used to treat staph infections.

How do I apply the nasal ointment?
1. Place a dime size amount of ointment on the tip of a cotton swab. Put the cotton swab with the ointment inside of your nose.
2. Repeat step 1 for the other side of your nose.
3. Press your nose together and release several times for one minute to spread the medicine all over the inside of your nose.

Repeat these steps twice a day (once in the morning and one time at night) for _____ days before the date of your surgery.