Your child has recurrent Staphylococcus aureus (staph or S. aureus) bacterial skin infections. He is probably a S. aureus carrier. Children can carry (be colonized with) staph in the nose, throat, armpit, rectum, and groin. Newborn infants can carry it around the belly button. Children who are wearing diapers often will get the infection in the diaper area.

Recurrent staph skin infections can be very hard to control. Many treatments have been tried to get rid of S. aureus colonization, and there is no proof that a specific treatment works long-term. Many people who try to get rid of staph will at first have negative skin or nose cultures, only to have the bacteria return weeks or months later. If decolonization is tried, the goal is to reduce the number of skin infections, but not necessarily to get rid of them. Sometimes doctors worry that children with repeated staph skin infections may have a problem with their immune system. If the children are otherwise healthy, they are unlikely to have a problem with their immune system. Children should be allowed to attend day care and school without restrictions.

Frequent hand washing is needed to try to help control the spread of the bacteria. Other methods that your doctor may use to try and control the bacteria are listed below.

Suggestions:

- Mupirocin (Bactroban®) ointment:
  
  [ ] Apply a pea-sized amount onto a cotton swab and insert it into one nostril.
  Using the clean end of the swab, repeat this procedure for the other nostril. Do this twice daily for _____ days.

  [ ] Apply around the anus and groin area twice daily for _____ days.

  [ ] Use as above for family members.

- Have your child bathe for 10 to 15 minutes _____ times a week for _____ weeks in a tub containing 1 teaspoon of bleach for every gallon of water.

- Shower or bathe your child regularly with ________________ soap, and wash for 15 to 20 seconds before rinsing off.

- Give your child a multivitamin each day.

- Dress your child in loose fitting, breathable (cotton) clothing.

- Trim his fingernails.

- Do not share towels and clothing that have not been washed.

- Use tea tree oil products (cream, body wash, etc.):

  ___________________________________________________________________________

- Other: _________________________________________________________________