

Infection Control

Advice for Patients

Together we can fight infection

Hospital infections can be introduced and spread by patients and visitors; this leaflet explains how you can help the staff to reduce them and provide a clean and safe environment in which to care for patients. When you are admitted to hospital you are no longer in your familiar surroundings and are sharing a ward with other patients. You may be vulnerable to infections because of your illness, surgery or medication and a hospital, because of its work, exposes you to other people's germs. By following the points in this leaflet, you can help us to:

- prevent vulnerable individuals picking up an infection,
- prevent the spread of infections
- prevent yourself picking up an infection.

What happens if I get an infection?

If your infection requires it, you may be moved to a side or single room, but do not worry. This is way of treating you more effectively and protecting other patients. Your nurse will explain to you and your relatives why you are being moved and what will happen.

Please ask about your condition and treatment so that you can understand what needs to be done and how you can comply with your treatment.

Can my visitors get infections?

A leaflet containing advice for visitors is also available; ask your nurse or healthcare assistant for one. If your visitors follow basic precautions they will protect themselves to a large extent. Visitors can protect themselves by undertaking appropriate hand hygiene. In most instances using the alcohol gel as directed below is sufficient. However hand **washing** is necessary in case of *Clostridium difficile* or during outbreaks of viral diarrhoea and vomiting on the ward. Alcohol gel is not effective in these circumstances. Hand hygiene should be carried out:

- before entering the ward
- after leaving the ward
- after helping to take care of you

If you are worried or unsure about infection control issues, ask your nurse to explain them or ask to speak to a member of the Infection Control Team. You can help yourself and others by:

- 1 Not touching your wound or any device that is in your arm/leg/bladder or other body cavity, for example: a drip or catheter.
- 2 Do not take off your dressing to show your wound to visitors.
- 3 Always washing your hands after visiting the toilet and before you eat. If you need help with this, ask a nurse or healthcare assistant to help you.
- 4 Keeping the space around you tidy and uncluttered so that the cleaning staff can access all surfaces to remove dust easily. Your relatives or visitors can help you with this.
- 5 Telling your nurse, the matron or clinical leader, if you spot any dirt or dust on the ward.
- 6 Reminding staff about hand hygiene if they forget; don't worry about offending them. Some may use alcohol hand rub nearby, as in most cases, this cleans hands just as well as washing them.
- 7 Showering as frequently as you are able to and changing into clean clothes regularly. If you need help to do this, ask a nurse or healthcare assistant to help you.
- 8 Asking your relatives or visitors not to visit in large groups.
- 9 Not sharing personal items or equipment with other patients unless it has been cleaned.
- 10 Asking your visitors to perform hand hygiene by washing their hands thoroughly before and after entering the ward and not sit on your bed or use the patients' toilets.

Further information:

- The Infection Control Team: 01223 217497
- Royal College of Nursing: www.rcn.org.uk/resources/mrsa

Adapted from:

Royal College of Nursing, Information for Patients – MRSA and other health care associated infections – how you can stop the spread of infection and stay well. April 2005.

Please ask if you require this information in other languages, large print or audio format: 01223 216032 or patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Potete chiedere di ottenere queste informazioni in altre lingue, in stampato grande o in audiocassetta.

Italian

若你需要本信息的繁體中文、大字體或音訊格式的版本，請要求索取。

Cantonese

तमने आ माहिती वीछ भाषाओमां, मोटा अक्षरोमां अथवा सांभली शकाय जेवा माध्यम (ओडीओ इमेज)मां जेठती छोय तो कृपा करीने पूछो.

Gujarati

تکایہ پرسیار بکے نہ گہر نہ وزانیاریہت دہوی بہ زمانیکی تر ، بہ پیتی گہورہ یانیش بہ شیوہی دہنگ

Kurdish

آگر آپ کو یہ معلومات دوسری زبانوں میں، بڑے الفاظ کی اشاعت میں یا آڈیو ٹیپ پر درکار ہوں تو ہمارے مہربانی اس کیلئے درخواست کریں۔

Urdu

Addenbrooke's is smoke-free. Please do not smoke anywhere on the site.
For advice on quitting, contact your GP or the NHS smoking helpline free, 0800 169 0 169

Document history

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