

# 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 using the alcohol gel or washing their hands thoroughly before and after entering the ward and to 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](http://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.



We are currently working towards a smoke free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

### Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Polish

Jeżeli chciałbyś uzyskać te informacje w innym języku, w dużej czcionce lub w formacie audio, poproś pracownika oddziału o kontakt z biurem Informacji Pacjenta (Patient Information) pod numerem telefonu: 01223 216032 lub pod adresem [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Portuguese

Se precisar desta informação noutra língua, em impressão de letras grandes ou formato áudio, por favor peça ao departamento que contacte a secção de Informação aos Doentes (Patient Information) pelo telefone 01223 216032 ou através do e-mail [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Arabic

إذا كنت تود الحصول على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، بالأحرف الكبيرة أو بشكل شريط صوتي، يمكنك أن تطلب من القسم الاتصال بمعلومات المريض على الرقم: 01223216032 أو عبر البريد الإلكتروني: [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Cantonese

如您需以另一語言版本、特大字體或錄音形式索取本資料，請要求部門聯絡病人諮詢服務：電話 01223 216032，電郵地址 [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Turkish

Eğer bu bilgileri başka bir dilde veya büyük baskılı veya sesli olarak isterseniz, lütfen bulunduğunuz bölümdeki görevlilere söyleyin Hasta Bilgilendirme servisini arasinlar: 01223 216032 veya [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Urdu

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی دیگر زبان میں، بڑے الفاظ میں یا آڈیو طریقہ سے درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی اس شعبہ سے پیشینٹ انفارمیشن سے ذیل کے ذریعہ رابطہ کرنے کی درخواست کریں: 01223 216032 یا [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Bengali

আপনি যদি এই তথ্য অন্য কোন ভাষায়, বড় অক্ষরে বা অডিও রেকর্ডিং পেতে চান তাহলে 'প্যাশেন্ট ইনফরমেশান' এর সঙ্গে 01223 216032 নম্বরে ফোন করে বা [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk) ঠিকানায় ই-মেইল করে যোগাযোগ করার জন্য ডিপার্টমেন্টটিতে অনুরোধ জানান।

### Document history

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