
Infection Control/Children's Services

Advice for parents, carers and visitors

This leaflet has been developed to help you help us minimise the risk of infections during your child's stay.

At certain times of the year, for example when the winter vomiting bug is widespread, visiting will need to be restricted. At these times, we request that no children or extended members of the family/close friends come to visit relatives at the hospital, unless for compassionate reasons. This needs to be discussed and agreed with the ward sister.

Hand washing

Why is it so important?

Hand washing is the most effective way of stopping infections passing from person to person. Good hand washing practice removes bacteria that live on your skin. Some bacteria live in the skin crevices, sweat glands and under fingernails. These types of bacteria are called resident organisms. They do not normally cause people a problem however, they are not easily removed. There are other types of organisms that live on the surface of the skin, that include Clostridium Difficile (C Diff), MRSA and the virus which causes the 'winter vomiting bug'. These bugs can be removed with careful hand hygiene.

Best practice

Hand hygiene must be performed:

- Before entering and on leaving a ward
- Before and after serving food to your child or yourself
- Before changing Hickman line dressing
- Before testing naso-gastric tubes
- Following taking bed pans etc to the sluice
- Following the changing of nappies
- Following the cleaning up of vomit
- Following the removal of disposable gloves

If your child is in isolation hand hygiene must be performed **every time** on leaving and entering the room.

When to wash or use gel

Always wash with soap or hibiscrub and water:


- After dealing with any body fluids, for example urine, vomit
- If your child has diarrhoea and/or vomiting
- Before changing any dressings, for example Hickman line

Alcohol gel is **only** to be used when your hands are socially clean. When used you should rub it into your hands for a minimum of 10 to 15 seconds. You will need to wash your hands after the 5th application of gel.

How to wash your hands

You should wet your hands first and then apply soap. Rub hands together thoroughly, paying particular attention to the backs of hands, go up to the wrist area, in between fingers, finger nail beds and thumbs – these areas are commonly missed.

SIX STAGE HANDWASHING TECHNIQUE



The diagram illustrates the six stages of handwashing. Stage 1 shows palm-to-palm rubbing. Stage 2 shows the back of the hand being washed. Stage 3 shows interdigital spaces being cleaned. Stage 4 shows the fingertips being rubbed against the palm. Stage 5 shows the thumb and wrist being washed. Stage 6 shows the nails being cleaned.

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| 1 palm to palm | 4 fingertips |
| 2 backs of hands | 5 thumbs and wrists |
| 3 interdigital spaces | 6 nails |

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Isolation procedures

What is isolation?

If your child has an infection we may need to nurse them in isolation in a single room. The aim of isolation is to prevent the transfer of infection from infected patients to other patients, staff and visitors.

Patients in hospital may be more vulnerable to infection due to illness, surgery or their medication. Therefore children with certain infections are nursed in a separate room to prevent the spread of infection to others.

Infections can be transmitted in different ways:

- They may be airborne and so transmitted in dust, aerosol or droplets of moisture.
- They may be spread by direct contact with another person, usually by the hands.
- They can indirectly pass from one person to another via the environment or contaminated equipment.

What does this mean for me and my child?

Your child **must** stay in their room; we do appreciate that this may be frustrating and difficult at times.

- Nursery nurses and play specialists work on the wards who can provide toys and activities to stimulate your child whilst in isolation. These toys must stay in the room during the isolation period.
- Your child will need to have a commode.
- If your child has a bath, this must be cleaned thoroughly afterwards.
- Parents and carers may come and go from the room. Everyone must wash their hands on entering and before leaving the room.
- Visiting will need to be restricted and we request that no children visit unless for compassionate reasons to be discussed with the ward sister.
- To help us prevent the spread of infection any visitors are asked to wash their hands and use the alcohol gel in the same way that you wash your hands.
- We ask visitors not to sit on the child's bed.

How does this affect my child's care?

We take several precautions to help us prevent the spread of infection when looking after your child in isolation:

- Your child's room will have a sign on it to inform anyone before entering they are being nursed in isolation.
- You will see the words 'barrier nursing' written on this. This sign will not have any personal information on it so your child's confidentiality will be maintained.

- All hospital staff will need to wear gloves and aprons when any physical contact is necessary with your child.
- We will perform hand hygiene when entering or leaving the room, and carrying out certain procedures.
- The door of your room should be kept shut at all times to help reduce the transmission of infection.
- If you have any further questions regarding this, please feel free to ask your nurse or any member of the child's medical team.

What to do if you are unwell

If you or any other visitors become unwell while staying with your child in hospital, we will ask you to go home straight away and stay away until 48 hours after your last symptom. This is important to prevent further spread of infection.

It is vital that you adhere to this advice if you have one or more of the following symptoms:

- **Feel sick**
- **Are being sick**
- **Have diarrhoea**
- **Have a high temperature**

We appreciate that having to leave your child in hospital when they are at their most vulnerable is very hard for parents. However, what we are trying to avoid is the spread of any infectious illnesses to other sick children. If you are unwell it is much harder to care for an ill child too. Let someone else who the child trusts and knows well take on this caring role while you concentrate on getting better.

Belongings

It would help enormously if you could only bring essential items for the duration of your child's stay in hospital. It is important that bed spaces are kept tidy in order to make cleaning easier.



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



Document history

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| Authors | Ruth Whitlock |
| Department | Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 0QQ www.cuh.org.uk |
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