

Infection Control Information

What You As A Patient Can Do

Infections can occur after many types of medical procedures. This is particularly true if you are having surgery. There are several things you can do to prevent infections from developing in the hospital:

- Wash your hands after you touch any type of dirty material. This is very important to remember to do after you have gone to the bathroom.
- Help your team of doctors and nurses take good care of you. Do not be scared to remind doctors and nurses to wash their hands before working with you.
- If you have an intravenous catheter, keep the skin around the dressing clean and dry. Tell your nurse quickly if the dressing becomes loose or gets wet.
- It is also important to watch the dressing on any wounds or sores you may have. Let your nurse know quickly if the dressing becomes loose or falling off.
- There are times when you might have a catheter or drainage tube after surgery. If you have a tube after surgery, always let your nurse know quickly if it becomes loose or out of place.
- If you are diabetic, you must keep your blood sugar controlled so that your body can heal. Your doctor can help you manage your blood sugar and prevent infections.
- Being overweight can increase your risk of infection after surgery. Losing weight before surgery can help lower your risk for infections.
- If you smoke, you should consider quitting. People that do not smoke are less likely to get a lung infection. Not smoking can also help you get well sooner after surgery.
- Make sure you follow your doctor's instructions regarding breathing treatments and getting out of bed. Don't be afraid to ask for help or pain medications.
- Tell your friends or family not to visit if they are feeling sick.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions about your care. The more you understand about your condition, the more that you can do to get well quickly.
- Source: National Patient Safety Foundation