

For more information:

- ask your hospital doctor or nurse
- ask your GP or Practice Nurse
- look on NHS Choices www.nhs.uk
- or Health Protection Agency www.hpa.org.uk or Public Health England www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england

Surrey & Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust

Trust Headquarters, East Surrey Hospital, Canada Avenue, Redhill, Surrey RH1 5RH Telephone: **01737 768511**

Web: www.surreyandsussex.nhs.uk

The Patient Advice & Liaison Service can be contacted on telephone **01737 231958**.

This leaflet can be provided in other languages and formats upon request. Tel. 01737 231958 or email: pals@sash.nhs.uk

THIS INFORMATION CAN BE MADE AVAILABLE IN OTHER LANGUAGES AND FORMATS, INCLUDING LARGER TEXT. CONTACT 01737 231958 FOR HELP.

我們可以提供這些資料的中文譯本和其他版本，包括大字體版。請致電01737231958要求協助。

CHINESE

આ જાણકારી મોટાં લખાણ સહિત, અન્ય ભાષાઓમાં અને ફોર્મેટમાં ઉપલબ્ધ થઈ શકશે.

મદદ માટે 01737231958 પર સંપર્ક કરો.

GUJARATI

NINIEJSE INFORMACJE MOŻNA OTRZYMAĆ W INNYCH JĘZYKACH I FORMATACH, NP. DUŻYM DRUKIEM DZWONIĄC POD NUMER 01737231958

POLISH

PODEMOS DISPONIBILIZAR ESTA INFORMAÇÃO NOUTRAS LÍNGUAS E NOUTROS FORMATOS, INCLUINDO TEXTO GRANDE CONTACTE O 01737 231958 PARA RECEBER AJUDA

PORTUGUESE

یہ معلومات دوسری زبانوں اور صورتوں میں مل سکتی ہے، جس میں بڑے حروف میں عبارت شامل ہے۔ مدد کے لئے 01737 231958 پر فون کریں۔

URDU

What can you do to help reduce Healthcare Associated Infection?

information for patients,
carers, relatives and visitors



A Healthcare Associated Infection (HCAI) is an infection which a patient may get as a result of medical treatment. It can be acquired as a result of treatment in hospital, a GP surgery, a patient's own home or in any other place where treatment is given. In most cases the infection is caused by the type of bacteria which are normally found on the body. Only a minority of patients get an infection with bacteria from a hospital or clinic.

How common is HCAI?

Large national studies of hospital patients have shown that about eight per cent of patients acquires an infection as a result of their treatment. This figure is similar to hospitals in the USA and Western Europe.

Why do patients get HCAI?

The most important factor is the susceptibility of the patient. For example, those with diabetes or cancer have a lowered immunity as a result of their illness, putting them at greater risk of infection. Elderly patients and the very young are also more susceptible to certain infections.

To treat a patient we often need to use devices such as intravenous drips and urinary catheters. These can act as sites where bacteria can enter the body and cause infection. All types of wound, including surgical wounds, provide a break in the skin's natural defence and bacteria may enter the body — usually bacteria which were already on the patient's skin.

Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and *Clostridium difficile* (*C. difficile*) are two types of bacteria which can result in HCAs. There are others, but these two are so significant that the Department of Health has developed national targets concerning their reduction.

There are other infections, for example Norovirus, that can spread easily in an environment such as a hospital. More information on MRSA, *C. difficile* and Norovirus is available in our series of information leaflets. Please ask a member of staff.

How can patients help?

- Keep your hands and body clean when you are in hospital. Take personal toiletries including soap with you.
 - Wash your hands frequently. Everyone should wash their hands after visiting the toilet, before meals and when they are visibly dirty. If you are unable to wash your hands then please ask a nurse who will be happy to help you.
 - Wear slippers when walking around the wards — this keeps your feet clean so that bacteria are not transferred from your feet to the bed.
 - Please do not sit on other patients' beds — this provides an ideal opportunity for bacteria to spread.
 - Help us to keep the hospital clean by keeping your locker top and bed table clear of clutter so that the cleaner or housekeeper can keep them free of dust.
 - If you see any dirt or dust around your bed, or if the toilet or bathroom are dirty, please report this to a nurse, the ward sister or matron.
 - If you have a urinary catheter, a drip or a feeding tube, it is extremely important that you do not touch them.
 - It is very easy to transfer germs that live on your hands into wounds. Therefore, it is very important that you do not touch your wound.
 - Tell staff immediately if a dressing becomes loose, or if a wound or intravenous drip site becomes painful.
 - You are encouraged to ask all members of staff to wash their hands before touching you. They will not mind the question and will thank you for the reminder.
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How can visitors help?

- On entering and leaving the wards or departments, please use the alcohol rub to clean your hands. Follow any additional infection control measures being used in the area that you are visiting.
- Please do not visit someone in hospital if you have a current illness. For example, if you have experienced diarrhoea and/or vomiting, you must refrain from visiting until at least **48 hours** after symptoms stopped.
- We ask that visitors do not bring or send flowers or plants. This is because they take up valuable space and make cleaning more difficult.
- Please do not sit on the beds — sit on a chair. Please do not place any bags on the bed. ●