



Infection Prevention and Control

Working for Patient Safety

Infection Prevention and Control

The Infection Control Department at Grey Bruce Health Services works with staff, patients and visitors to stop and control infections in hospitals. In order to give you the safest care possible, we look for antibiotic resistant germs, respiratory illnesses, stomach illnesses and infections that may occur after surgery. You may be asked to have some tests done as part of these monitoring programs. This will help to protect all of our patients.

What are antibiotic resistant germs?

- ❖ All people have germs in their bowel and nose—this is normal.
- ❖ Some of these germs change over time as they are exposed to antibiotics.
- ❖ Germs that no longer respond to some antibiotics are called **antibiotic resistant** germs
- ❖ These germs can be easily passed from one patient to
- ❖ the next on our hands
- ❖ They are not harmful to healthy people but can cause
- ❖ problems for very ill patients

Who might have these germs?

- ❖ People who have been in hospitals or a nursing home are more likely to have come into contact with these germs. This is because there are a greater number of sick people in these places.

What is GBHS doing about these resistant germs?

- ❖ We look for these germs in all patients who have been in any hospital over the past year.
- ❖ We also look for these germs if you live in a nursing home
- ❖ We will ask you for a rectal and nasal swab

How are these tests done?

- ❖ We get a rectal swab by gently putting a Q-tip into the outer part of the rectum for a sample of the germs in that area
- ❖ We get a nasal swab by gently putting a Q-tip into both nostrils

What if I am found to have an antibiotic resistant germ?

- ❖ You may not feel any different or have any illness but we need to take special care to prevent the germ from going to other patients.
- ❖ The **germ** can be harmful to very sick patients. It is the **germ** that is the problem, not **you**.
- ❖ Your nurse will explain the special care that you and your family must take while in hospital
- ❖ You will be given a booklet to answer any questions you may have
- ❖ You may ask your nurse to call the Infection Control Nurse if you and your family have more questions or concerns

Sick people come to hospitals and are cared for near other sick people. Health care workers need to keep patients safe. Sometimes infections do develop. Some of the reasons that patients may get an infection include:

- ❖ Staying in hospital for long periods
- ❖ Use of antibiotics (which are needed to treat other infections)
- ❖ Having surgery
- ❖ Having a serious illness
- ❖ Have many medical problems

What other tests might be done to help control infections?

- ❖ If you become fevered while in hospital, blood tests might be taken to see if a germ is growing in your blood
- ❖ If you start coughing, tests may be done to see if a germ is growing in your lungs
- ❖ If you start vomiting or having diarrhea, samples may be taken to see if a germ is causing you to be ill

Any time you have symptoms like these; health care people might use gloves, gowns and face masks to help prevent the germs that are making you sick from getting onto things and from going to other patients.

What can I do to reduce my chance of getting an infection?

- ❖ Hand washing is the most important thing you can do while in hospital
- ❖ Wash your hands often. Always wash after going to the bathroom and before you eat
- ❖ If you are able to walk about in the hall, wash your hands when you leave your room and when you come back.
- ❖ Remind your health care provider to wash their hands before they care for you
- ❖ Family or visitors must wash their hands before they come in and when they leave your room. Remind them!
- ❖ Only 2 visitors at a time because you need to get rest to recover.
- ❖ Ask your family not to visit you if they have any sort of illness, even a cold; they can phone you instead.

How to Wash Your Hands



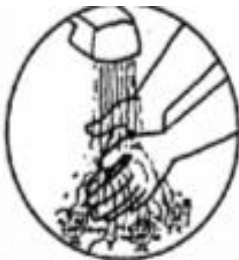
1. WET



2. SOAP



3. WASH



4. RINSE



5. DRY



**6. TURN OFF
WATER WITH
PAPER TOWEL**

- ❖ If you are not able to wash your hands at the sink, ask your nurse to help you or use the alcohol hand sanitizer at your bedside.

What should my health care team do to prevent infection?

- ❖ All your health care providers must wash their hands before caring for you.
- ❖ They may be wearing gloves, a gown, and a face mask when caring for you. This is done with all patients with potential infections and helps to prevent germs from spreading to other patients.
- ❖ Your nurse will tell you and your family if there are rules that must be followed
- ❖ If you have more questions about Infection Prevention and Control, please ask your doctor, nurse, or call **Infection Control** at extension **2032** or Extension **2965**.

Health care providers sometimes need to be reminded of what to do to prevent infection. If you are worried that a health care provider is not following the rules, tell your nurse or doctor.