

Infection Prevention

An information guide



Infection Prevention when visiting adults in hospital - How you can prevent the spread of infection.

Introduction

Hospital infections can be spread by patient to patient and by visitors.

This leaflet explains how you can help to reduce the spread of infection and maintain a safe clean environment for your relative or friend to be cared for in.

Before you visit

Do not visit the hospital if you have had diarrhoea and/or vomiting. You should not visit anyone in hospital until you are symptom free in the **48 hours** before you visit.

Do not visit the hospital if you have a cold, influenza, a chest infection or any symptoms of Coronavirus. This is very important especially if you plan to visit a patient on the intensive care unit, oncology, or haematology.

Ensure any open wounds are covered with a clean, waterproof dressing to protect yourself from infection.

If you had contact with people who have infections prior to visiting someone in hospital

Do not visit the hospital if you have been in contact with somebody who has an infection, as some infectious conditions, such as chicken pox, shingles and mumps are especially harmful to patients with a vulnerable immune system.

When you enter the ward/unit always report to the reception/nurses station. The staff can advise you if you need to take any further precautions or wear personal protective equipment.

If you are unsure or require any other information the staff can give you the number of the Infection Prevention and Control team for advice.

Hand hygiene

The most effective way to reduce cross infection is to maintain good hand hygiene. Wash your hands with soap and water or cleaning your hands with the alcohol gel provided at the entrance/exit to the ward is the best way to protect your relatives and friends, and yourself.

If you assist your relative or friend you should wash your hands using soap and water.

You should wet your hands and then apply soap. Rub your hands together, paying particular attention to the back of your hands, in between fingers, finger nail beds and thumbs, rub up the wrist area.

Ensure you dry your hands thoroughly. There should be signage at each sink to help you if you are unsure.

Patients that are in isolation

Patients are sometimes nursed in isolation to prevent the spread of infection to other patients, staff and visitors. They may be moved into a single room or into a bay.

Patients in isolation may need special precautions and staff/visitors attending to patients may need to wear specialist personal protective equipment.

Speak to the nursing staff to find out if you need to take any of these precautions before visiting your relative/friend.

You should always perform hand hygiene upon entering and leaving.

General advice

- **Do not** bring unnecessary items into hospital for your relative/friend. This is to ensure all personal belongings are stored in the bedside locker and will aid the ward staff to maintain high standards of cleaning.
- Adhere to visiting rules and check with ward staff how many visitors are allowed in at a time.
- Use the chairs provided to sit on. **Do not** sit on the patients' bed.
- **Do not** touch patients' wounds, drips or devices. If you do so accidentally please wash your hands thoroughly.
- **Do not** enter the ward kitchen. Food brought into hospital should be **pre-packaged items** that do not require refrigeration. Any other food should be prepared following strict food hygiene regulations, stored correctly in transit to the hospital and consumed immediately. Ward staff **cannot** re-heat food brought in from home. If this cannot be guaranteed then food should not be brought in.

- Children are allowed to visit but **must be** supervised at all times. It is important to note that although children are welcome to visit, babies and young children are more susceptible to contracting and transmitting infections.
- Flowers are not allowed in the hospital. Speak to the ward staff if you have any concerns regarding the cleanliness of the environment,

Further information

Adapted from Royal College of Nursing, Information for patients – MRSA and other healthcare associated infections – how you can stop the spread of infection and stay well (April 2005).

If English is not your first language and you need help, please contact the Interpretation and Translation Service

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Dacă engleza nu este prima ta limbă și ai nevoie de ajutor, te rugăm să contactezi Serviciul de interpretare și traducere

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☎ : 0161 627 8770

@ : interpretation@pat.nhs.uk

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For advice on stopping smoking contact the Specialist Stop Smoking Service on 01706 517 522

For general enquiries please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0161 604 5897

For enquiries regarding clinic appointments, clinical care and treatment please contact 0161 624 0420 and the Switchboard Operator will put you through to the correct department / service

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Date of publication: December 2004

Date of review: July 2021

Date of next review: July 2023

Ref: PI(DS)094

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