

Infection prevention and control

# Preventing infection during your hospital stay

Information for patients

Infections can occur at any time but you can be more likely to catch infections when you are in hospital.

**Here are a few things YOU can do to help prevent infection during your hospital stay.**

- Our staff are very good at cleaning their hands, however if you are concerned, please do not hesitate to remind them to wash their hands or use alcohol hand rub (sanitiser) before attending to you.
- Wash your hands frequently and carefully especially before eating; after going to the toilet and whenever they look or feel dirty. Please also remind your friends and family to do the same.



- If it is difficult for you to wash your hands please ask a member of staff for assistance, or alternatively you may wish to bring some moist wipes into hospital with you.
- Remember you and your visitors can use the hand rub (sanitiser) too! Just put a small shot of the gel into the centre of one hand. Rub all over both hands and allow to dry. No need for soap, water or paper towels.
- If you are having surgery: do not shave the operation area unless asked to do so by the nursing team.
- Do not touch or disturb any dressings or be tempted to “take a peep” as this may help introduce infection. Ask a nurse to replace any dressing that becomes loose or wet.
- If you have a catheter or any other drainage bag, let your nurse know if it becomes full, loose or dislodged. The nurse should empty the bag and ensure that any dressing around the drain is kept clean and dry.
- Staff should remove any intravenous devices (usually a plastic needle in your hand or arm) if they have not been used for more than 24 hours. Tell staff immediately if you experience any pain, soreness or redness at the site of the needle.
- Please limit the amount of personal items that you bring into hospital. If the area gets cluttered it makes it more difficult to clean and remove any germs.

**If you are unhappy with any aspect of ward cleanliness or you feel that a piece of equipment is not clean enough for you to use, please inform a member of staff as soon as possible.**