

## HAND HYGIENE

Special care should be paid to hand hygiene as it is the best way to prevent the spread of germs.

### How to wash your hands:

- Wet hands with warm water
- Apply soap to hands
- Spend at least 15-30 seconds lathering and washing hands
- Rub hands together, paying attention to finger tips, around rings and thumbs
- Rinse thoroughly
- Pat dry with paper towel
- Use paper towel to turn off tap and open door

### How to clean your hands with alcohol hand rub:

- Apply to palm of one hand
- Rub hands together, covering all areas of hands and fingers
- Rub until hands feel dry
- If hands are visibly dirty you must wash them before using alcohol based hand rub.

## FLU OR COLD - How can you tell?

| SYMPTOMS               | COLD                                    | FLU   |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Fever                  | Rare                                    | High fever, sudden onset, lasts 3-4 days            |
| Headache               | Rare                                    | Usual, can be severe                                |
| General aches & pains  | Sometimes, mild                         | Usual, can be severe                                |
| Fatigue & weakness     | Sometimes, mild                         | Usual, severe, may last 2-3 weeks or more           |
| Extreme fatigue        | Unusual                                 | Usual early onset, can be severe                    |
| Runny, stuffy nose     | Common                                  | Common  |
| Sneezing               | Common                                  | Sometimes   |
| Sore throat            | Common                                  | Common  |
| Cough/chest discomfort | Sometimes, mild to moderate             | Usual, can become severe                            |
| Complications          | Can lead to sinus congestion or earache | Can lead to pneumonia, can worsen a chronic illness |

If you have any questions about infection control, please direct them to the nurse on the nursing unit.

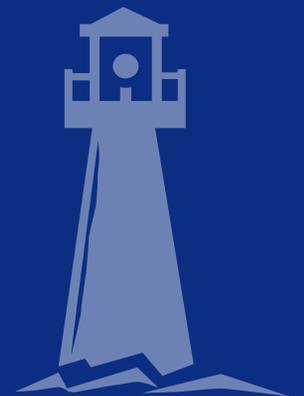
**IT'S OK TO ASK NURSES, DOCTORS AND OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS IF THEY HAVE CLEANED THEIR HANDS**

July 2014

## INFECTION CONTROL IN HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

Information  
for  
Patients/Residents/Clients  
and Families

Infection Prevention  
& Control Program



## **WHY ARE INFECTION CONTROL GUIDELINES NEEDED?**

Infection control guidelines focus on measures to prevent the spread of infection. This is necessary to protect patients/residents/clients, staff, volunteers and visitors from germs that can cause infection.

## **WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON SOURCES OF GERMS?**

Sources of germs include:

- Other persons who may have germs on their hands or other parts of body
- Surfaces and items that may be contaminated with germs

## **HOW ARE THESE GERMS SPREAD?**

Germs are spread:

- By unwashed hands
- Through contact with surfaces and items that have not been cleaned properly
- By breathing in germs that have been coughed or sneezed into the air by another person

## **ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANT BACTERIA**

Antibiotic resistant bacteria, such as methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), are germs that are resistant to the antibiotics usually used to kill them. If an infection develops, stronger antibiotics must be used.

The best way to prevent the spread of MRSA is through good hand hygiene.

Patients/Residents/clients who have MRSA do not pose a risk to other residents when staff follow routine infection control precautions.

Roommates of a patient/resident/client with MRSA have not been shown to be at higher risk of MRSA infection than patients/residents/clients in rooms elsewhere in the facility.

## **OUTBREAKS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES**

Some infections, such as influenza and gastroenteritis that occur in the community can spread to patients/residents/clients in the facility. When this happens, stricter measures are used to prevent spread of infection. Outbreak control measures include:

- Restricting staff and patient/resident movement in the facility
- Implementing visitor precautions/restrictions and delaying some social activities

## **WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF GERMS?**

Hand hygiene is the best way to stop the spread of germs that cause infection.

Hand hygiene refers to washing your hands with soap and water or using an alcohol based hand rub to clean your hands.

**Clean your hands** when they are dirty and at the following times:

- Before you eat
- After you use the washroom
- Before you enter or leave a patient/residents room
- Before and after you care for someone who is sick
- After handling animals, such as cats and dogs
- Check with Nursing Staff before bringing in food.

Other things you can do to help prevent the spread of infection:

- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Tell family members to stay home if they are ill