

## WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHILE IN HOSPITAL?

Special precautions will be taken while you are infectious:

- A sign will be posted
- You may need to stay in your room
- Staff may wear gown, gloves, or a mask when providing direct care.
- All staff and visitors must clean their hands when they enter and leave your room.

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

**REMINDE VISITORS TO CLEAN THEIR HANDS**



**HAND HYGIENE  
THE BEST  
WAY TO PREVENT  
INFECTION**

Developed: March 2017

## HAND HYGIENE

Special care must be paid to hand hygiene as it is the best way to prevent the spread of germs. **Good hand hygiene includes:**

### **Alcohol-Based Hand Rub**

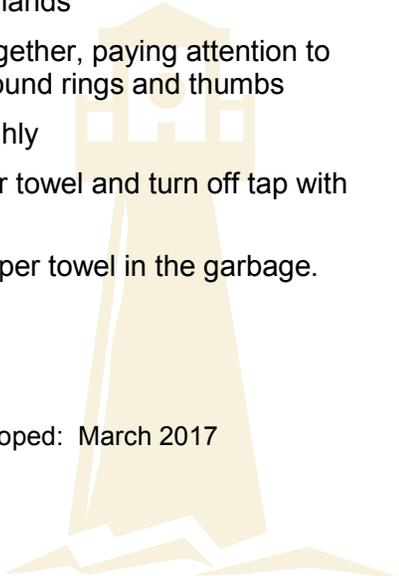
- Apply to palm of one hand
- Rub hands together, covering all of hands and fingers
- Rub until hands feel dry
- If hands are visibly dirty you must wash them before using Alcohol Based Hand Rub

### **Hand Washing**

- Use warm running water and soap
- Spend at least **15-30** seconds lathering and washing hands
- Rub hands together, paying attention to finger tips, around rings and thumbs
- Rinse thoroughly
- Dry with paper towel and turn off tap with paper towel
- Dispose of paper towel in the garbage.

## INVASIVE GROUP A STREPTOCOCCUS

**Information for Patients,  
Residents, Families &  
Visitors**



INFECTION PREVENTION  
& CONTROL PROGRAM

## **WHAT IS INVASIVE GROUP A STREPTOCOCCUS?**

- Group A streptococci are bacteria (germs) found in the throat and on the skin.
- Most infections cause mild illness like strep throat and impetigo; however they can spread to the blood, muscle, lungs and fat tissue causing life threatening disease
- The most severe forms of this disease are: necrotizing fasciitis (flesh eating disease), an infection of the muscle and fat tissue, and streptococcal shock syndrome (STSS). Both progress quickly and cause low blood pressure/ shock and injury to organs like the kidneys, liver and lungs.

## **WHO CAN GET INVASIVE GROUP A STREPTOCOCCUS?**

- Few people will develop Invasive Group A Streptococcus. Some higher risk groups include: persons with skin lesions (cuts, chicken pox and surgical wounds), the elderly and people with a history of alcohol abuse and IV drug use.
- Most people will have a skin or throat infection and some may not have any symptoms.

## **WHY DOES INVASIVE GROUP A STREPTOCOCCUS OCCUR?**

- This occurs when there are sores or other breaks in the skin that allow the bacteria (germs) to enter the body.
- It can also occur when the person's ability to fight infection is reduced due to chronic illness or an illness affecting the immune system.
- The stronger the strain of the bacteria the more likely it is to cause severe disease.

## **WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF INVASIVE GROUP A STREPTOCOCCUS?**

- Early signs and symptoms of necrotizing fasciitis include: fever, severe pain and swelling, and redness at the wound site. This occurs quite quickly, over several hours and requires immediate medical attention.
- Early signs and symptoms of STSS may include fever, dizziness, confusion, low blood pressure, rash and abdominal pain.

## **WHAT IS THE TREATMENT FOR INVASIVE GROUP A STREPTOCOCCUS?**

- Prompt medical attention and antibiotics are recommended.
- Severe cases may require additional support and admission to hospital.
- Surgery may also be needed if you have developed necrotizing fasciitis.

## **HOW CAN I PREVENT INVASIVE GROUP A STREPTOCOCCUS?**

- The spread of this disease can be reduced by washing your hands, keeping any wounds or open areas clean.
- Wounds should be monitored for signs and symptoms of infection. Things to watch for include redness, swelling and pain at the site. If you notice this especially if you have a fever you should contact your doctor immediately.
- Routine childhood immunization with varicella (chicken pox) vaccine is also recommended. As skin lesions caused by chicken pox (varicella virus) can increase the risk of developing an invasive Group A Strep infection.