

Fast Facts

Hospital

- Germs are on any surface (beds, IV (intravenous) poles, bedside tables, the desk at the nursing station, the walls and the floors)
- Huge risk of cross-contamination caused by a wide variety of factors (increased workload of hospital staff, rapid turnover of patients, increased volume of patients, general clutter and poor ventilation, especially true in older hospitals)
- Can lead to healthcare-associated infection (HAI)--an infection from something other than what a patient came in for
- The reason: patients are already immunocompromised (their immune system is fighting another infection), leaving them vulnerable to other infections
- Several things can increase risk (being elderly or an infant, having surgery/type of surgery, the length of your stay, overuse of antibiotics, use of invasive equipment—urinary catheters, respiratory equipment and iv drips, having a wound/burn/incision/ulcer and being in high-risk areas, such as intensive care unit (ICU))
- Some of the organisms that are responsible for HAIs come into the hospital on or in the patients who ended up affected by them because their immune system was weakened by the infection they came in for, it allowed the second microbe to cause havoc

<i>Hospital Cleaning Process</i>	<i>Tips for Patients</i>	<i>Tips for Visitors</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use detergents and disinfectants -Detergents remove dirt, grease and germs by scrubbing surfaces with solutions made out of soap and water -Disinfectants kill germs by a chemical or physical intervention, such as wiping down a surface with a specific chemical or using a sterilization process to clean surgical instruments -Different processes and different chemicals don't work on all types of germs (some are targeted toward specific organisms) -Products are powerful and helpful, but also thought to be contributing to the development of drug-resistant organisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Wash your hands -Ask providers to wash their hands -Using hand sanitizer is ok unless hands are visibly dirty <p style="text-align: center;">Decrease the length of time that you are required to be in the hospital by taking charge of your care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Learn about the medications you are on, such as what is their purpose, what side effects might they cause and how long will you need to take them -If bedridden, ask your doctor what steps are they taking to prevent you from getting blood clots -If not bedridden, be careful when you are up walking because there are all sorts of tripping hazards -Wear non-slip socks, but they aren't designed to be worn for extended periods of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -If you are sick, don't visit -Leave babies and small children at home -If you can't leave them at home, limit the time they spend at the hospital and minimize how much contact they have with the floor and other surfaces -Limit the number of things you touch (call bells, hospital machinery and linens) -Try not to touch the patient too much (you could spread germs to them) -Don't touch your face with your hands if at all possible -If cough or sneeze, use the crease of your elbow -After you touch anything, wash your hands thoroughly -If your loved one is on isolation, wear whatever protective garments the hospital staff advise -Wear closed-toed shoes

	time (it is ok to ask for a new pair of socks)	-After your visit, disinfect your shoes when you get home, wash your clothes and take a shower
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