

Understanding and Preventing

HOSPITAL ACQUIRED INFECTIONS

A hospital-acquired infection (HAI) is one that is acquired after contact with the healthcare services. This most often occurs after hospital treatment, but can also happen after treatment in outpatient clinics, nursing homes and other healthcare environments.

Statistics on HAIs

4%

4% of hospital patients have at least one HAI.

42%

The most common HAIs are **pneumonia** and **surgical site infections**, which between them account for **42%** of HAIs.

Device-associated infections (e.g. ventilator-associated pneumonia) account for **1 in 4** HAIs.

43% of infections develop **during** a stay in a critical care unit, or **within 48 hours** of leaving.

43%

HAIs are almost **equally likely between genders** (51% female, 49% male).

8%

8% of HAIs occur within patients aged **12 months or younger**.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The Most Common HAIs

Pneumonia



Frequency 21.8% of HAIs



What it is An infection of the lungs that can cause mild to severe illness



Symptoms Cough, shortness of breath, fever

Tips for Prevention



Get yourself and your children vaccinated



Practise good hand hygiene



Do not smoke



Keep your immune system strong by eating healthily, exercising regularly and getting sufficient sleep

Surgical Site Infection



Frequency 21.8% of HAIs

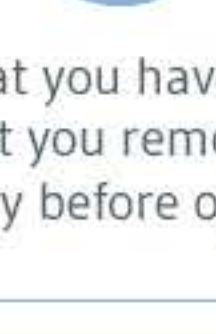


What it is An incision in the skin made by a surgeon to carry out surgery; ranges from superficial to severe

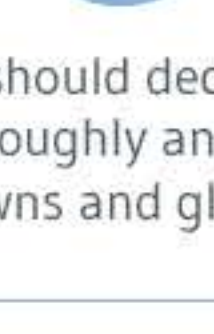


Symptoms Cough, shortness of breath, fever

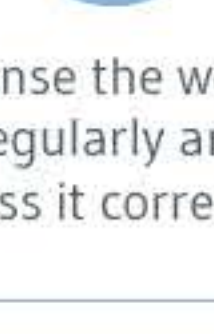
Tips for Prevention



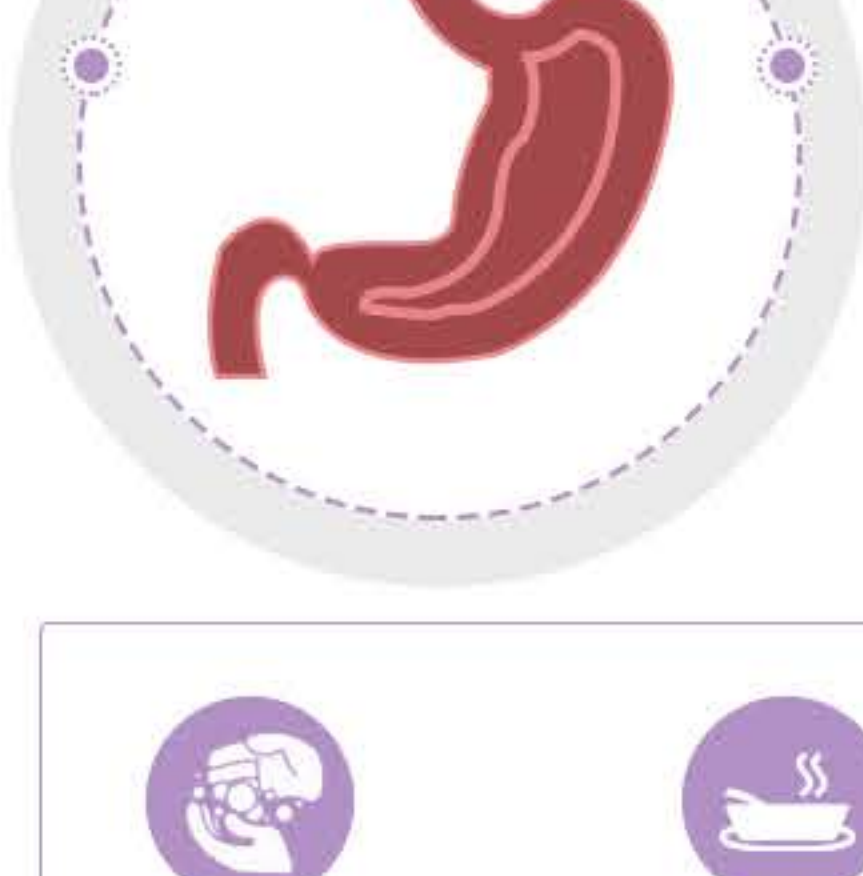
Ensure that you have showered and that you remove hand jewellery before operation



Surgeons should decontaminate hands thoroughly and use sterile gowns and gloves



Cleanse the wound regularly and dress it correctly



Gastroenteritis



Frequency 17.1% of HAIs



What it is An inflammation of the bowel caused by an infection



Symptoms Diarrhoea, vomiting, stomach cramps

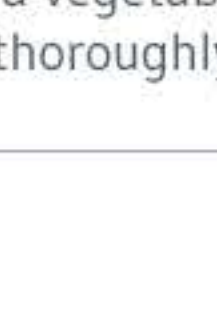
Tips for Prevention



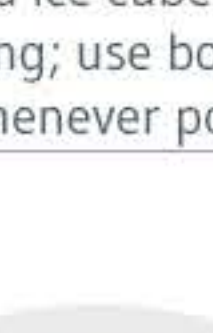
Wash your hands regularly



Do not eat raw or undercooked food



Wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly



Avoid contaminated water and ice cubes when travelling; use bottled water whenever possible

Urinary Tract Infection



Frequency 12.9% of HAIs

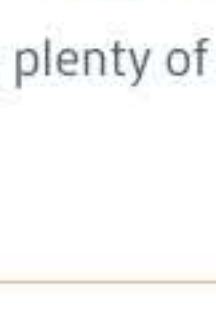


What it is An infection which occurs when germs enter the urethra and spread to the bladder

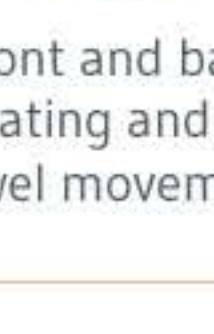


Symptoms Passing urine more frequently than usual, pain passing urine, fever, chills

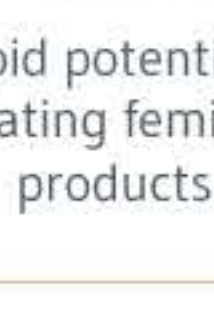
Tips for Prevention



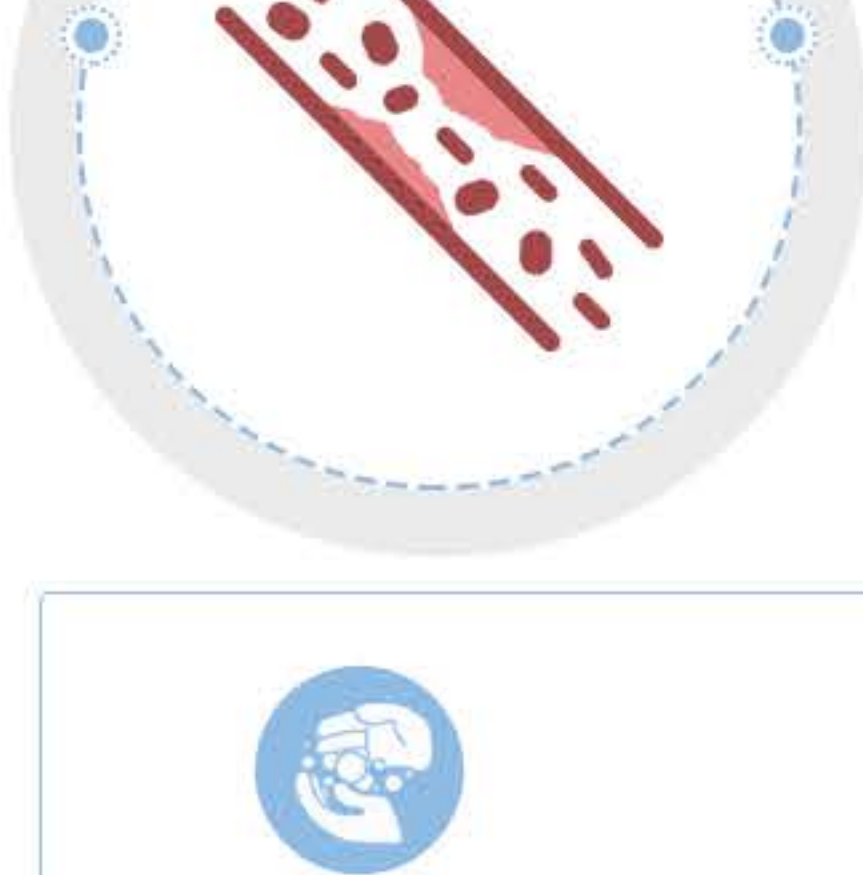
Drink plenty of water



Wipe front and back after urinating and after bowel movements



Avoid potentially irritating feminine products



Primary Bloodstream Infection



Frequency 9.9% of HAIs



What it is An infection which can occur when germs enter the bloodstream



Symptoms Fever, chills, general weakness, nausea, vomiting

Tips for Prevention



Carry out thorough hand washing before operation



Cover the wound with sterile gauze or sterile, transparent dressings



Replace damp or soiled dressings

Who is Most Vulnerable to HAIs?

Premature babies and **extremely ill children**



Elderly people who may be frail



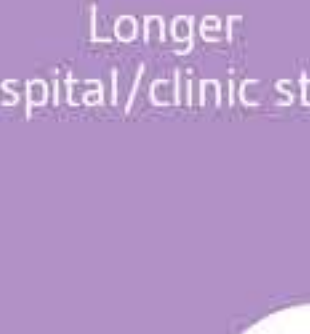
People with **medical conditions** such as diabetes



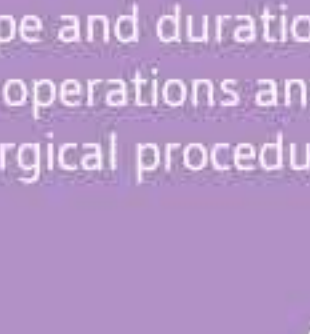
People with **diseases that compromise their immune system** or people who are being treated with chemotherapy or steroids.



Risk Factors for HAIs



Longer hospital/clinic stays



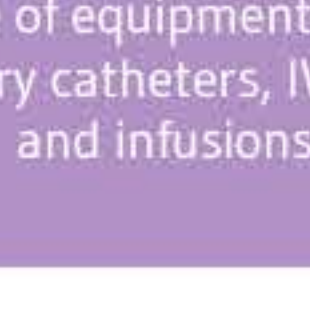
Type and duration of operations and surgical procedures



Poor hand hygiene practices



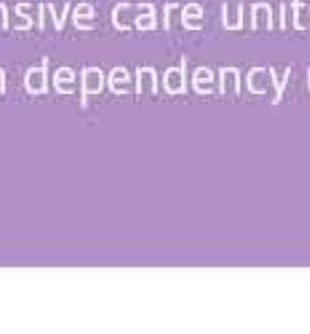
Overuse of antibiotics



Invasive procedures that require the use of equipment such as urinary catheters, IV drips and infusions



Wounds and incisions



High-risk areas such as intensive care units and high dependency units

What The Experts Say



Surgical patients will learn that they can reduce their risk of infection and other complications by asking that their pre-operative antibiotics be given within one hour of the start of their surgery, by questioning their nurse if antibiotics are not stopped within 24 hours after their surgery and by enquiring if they need medication to prevent blood clots.

Dr Julia Hallisy

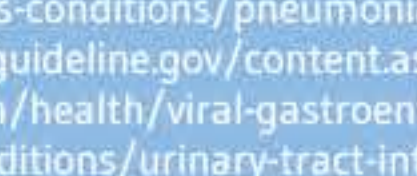
General dentist and HAI expert based in San Francisco, California.



The most advanced medical care won't work if clinicians don't prevent infections through basic things such as regular hand hygiene. Health care workers want the best for their patients; following standard infection control practices every time will help ensure their patients' safety.

Dr Tom Frieden

Director of the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention.



www.cleaningservicesgroup.co.uk

References

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