

Preface

Healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) are becoming more deadly and difficult to treat as a result of multidrug-resistant organisms. According to the World Health Organization, “Of every 100 hospitalized patients at any given time, 7 in developed and 10 in developing countries will acquire at least one HAI.”

As infection preventionists (IPs), we must remain up to date on changes involving evidence-based practice, evolving microorganisms, updates to guidelines, and the latest advances in the care and maintenance of medical devices. Significant strides have been made to reduce HAIs worldwide. Prevention efforts are key to further reducing HAIs and include their recognition and isolation, appropriate use of personal protective equipment, diligent hand hygiene, and thorough environmental cleaning.

This 4th edition of *Ready Reference for Microbes* has been updated to describe current and known emerging pathogens. As a quick reference, it provides straightforward information to IPs and healthcare professionals on medically common and clinically significant microorganisms found in humans: bacteria, common commensals, viruses, fungi, parasites, and organisms used as bioterrorism agents. It also includes a chapter on antimicrobial therapy, and seven “quick facts” appendixes on essential topics: common pathogens by body site, methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Clostridium difficile*, seasonal influenza, isolation precautions, antibiograms, and antimicrobial stewardship. References and resources are provided at the end of each chapter and appendix to offer additional information on the discussed topics and expand the reader’s knowledge.

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