

Infection Prevention

Learn about who's working to keep you safe and how you can take control of your care.

and YOU

Who are "infection preventionists?"

Infection preventionists are among the many experts who help to protect you from healthcare-associated infections. They work in many healthcare settings to keep you, visitors, volunteers, employees, and healthcare providers safe from infection.

What is a healthcare-associated infection?

Healthcare-associated infections can occur while a patient receives care or treatment. These kinds of infections are often preventable.

How does an infection preventionist affect the care I receive?

Infection preventionists partner with your healthcare team and use proven methods to ensure that you stay safe from healthcare-associated infections during your stay.

Although you may not see the infection preventionist during your visit, you will notice the presence of infection prevention everywhere throughout the facility:

- Hand sanitizer gels or rubs
- Disinfecting wipes
- Healthcare providers wearing gloves, masks and gowns
- Hand washing stations
- "Cover your cough" signs
- Environmental services cleaning staff

What do I need to do to stay safe?

Please speak up! Do not feel shy about asking for more information about your care. Infection prevention is everyone's business! If you have a concern, feel free to ask the following questions:

- Before receiving an injection, ask if the needle, vial, and syringe have been newly opened for you.
- If you are having surgery, ask your doctor if you should shower with an antiseptic soap before you are admitted.
- If you have not seen healthcare staff who care for you either wash their hands or use an alcohol hand rub, ask them to do so. This also applies to visitors.
- Ask your provider if you need any shots or vaccines.
- If you have a catheter in your bladder or vein, tell your nurse if it becomes loose or painful. Also ask each day when it can be removed.
- If you think that the area around you or the equipment in your room looks dirty, ask to have it cleaned.
- If you have a bandage (also called a "dressing"), let your nurse know if it gets wet, loose, or feels uncomfortable.

One last important reminder:

Wash your hands or use alcohol hand rub often. This is one of the most important ways to prevent infection.

Who is the infection preventionist at this facility?

How can I learn more about infection prevention?

Visit the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC)'s website www.preventinfection.org to learn more about how you can protect yourself and your loved ones from infection.

