

"What's Bugging You?"



Test Your Knowledge of Hospital Infections

In the majority of cases hospital infections such as MRSA and C.difficile develop after cross infection from another patient, either through direct patient to patient contact, via healthcare staff, or via a contaminated environment.

Government measures are not enough. With one in four NHS trusts failing to hit targets aimed at tackling bugs like MRSA and Clostridium difficile (C diff), it is a sensible precaution to be prepared to protect yourself and your family because hospitals are unable able to. Patients and their families need to be prepared as well. One of the keys to effectively managing hospital infections is a public that is educated in what to do to avoid these infections before going into hospital.

Now see how much you know... (there may be more than one answer!)

1. What does MRSA stand for?	Tick Box
a. Methicillin-resilient Staphylococcus aureus	
b. Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus	
c. Methicillin-required Staphylococcus aureus	

2. If you have MRSA which symptoms might you have?	
a. Redness, swelling and tenderness at the site of infection	
b. A high fever	
c. A red, inflamed wound with yellow pus seeping from it	
d. Pneumonia	
e. All of the above symptoms	

3. If you have C.difficile which symptoms might you have?	
a. Sickness and diarrhoea	
b. Diarrhoea	
c. Very severe illness with ulceration and bleeding from the colon (colitis)	

4. Government figures estimate that hospital acquired infections are a primary factor in how many deaths a year?	
a. 500	
b. 5000	
c. 5500	
d. 7000	

5. What factors are known to increase the risk of getting infections?	
a. Elderly patients with serious underlying illnesses	
b. Patients who have been treated with broad spectrum antibiotics	
c. Surgical wounds, pressure sores, breaks in the skin	
d. Ingestion of bacteria	

6. Hand washing is the single most important and most effective means of preventing the spread of infections. When should you wash your hands?	Tick Box
a. Before touching a patient	
b. After touching a patient	
c. Before and after using the toilet/commode/bedpan	
d. Before preparing or eating food	
e. Following direct contact with potentially contaminated equipment and surfaces, e.g. door handles, telephone, food trays, lockers etc.	
f. After handling soiled bedding/clothing	
g. Before and after changing wound dressings	
h. All of the above	

7. What should you do if you have a cut or abrasion?	Tick Box
a. Suck the wound to remove any bacteria	
b. Wash the wound with soap and water	
c. Cover the wound with a waterproof dressing	
d. Encourage the wound to bleed	

8. What can you do to prevent the spread of infection?	
a. Keep clean and dirty linen separate	
b. Wash dirty linen separately from the rest of the household washing	
c. Wear disposable gloves when changing wound dressings, bedding etc.	
d. Wash your hands regularly with soap and water	

9. Why should you wear gloves during patient care?	
a. To protect you from getting an infection from the patient	
b. To reduce the risk of cross infection	
c. To protect your hands from bloods splashes and other body fluids	
d. All of the above	

10. What is meant by the term disinfection?	
a. A process which fully removes germs	
b. The cleaning of items or areas to kill germs	
c. A process which cleans but does not kill all germs	
d. All of the above	

Answers

1. B – Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus.
2. The answer is E - these are all symptoms of MRSA although not all patients will have all of these symptoms.
3. The answer is B&C - C. difficile can cause diarrhoea, ranging from a mild bout to a very severe illness with ulceration and bleeding from the colon (colitis) and, at worst, perforation of the intestine leading to peritonitis.
4. The answer is C.
5. A, B, C, D - these are all high risk situations and increase the risk of infections.
6. The answer is H - frequent hand washing is the single, most important method you can use to prevent infections. Clean hands are the enemy of infections. Washing our hands is simple and everyone can do it.
7. The answer is B,C&D - you should never suck a wound as this could lead to ingestion bacteria, the main route C.difficile gets into the body.
8. A, B, C, D - these are all essential measures you can take to prevent cross infections.
9. D – gloves protect both you and the patient. Disposable single use gloves should be worn and disposed of in a sealed bag to prevent the spread of bacteria.
10. Disinfection reduces the number of viable micro-organisms but may not kill all viruses and bacterial spores. Disinfection does not achieve the same reduction in contamination levels as sterilisation.

If you answered all 10 questions correctly, well done! You are well informed and this will enable you to use your knowledge to reduce your risk of infection.

If you got 1-5 wrong. You would benefit from finding out more about keeping infections at bay. You should adopt rigorous hygiene practices to take the very best care of your health. Why not send for our free leaflets on MRSA and C.difficile or you can download them from our website at www.mrsaprotection.com

If you got 5 or more wrong. You would benefit from one of our basic infection control courses to minimise the risk of spreading infection in line with current National Guidelines. Designed to help you take care of yourself or your family, before during and after hospital treatment, this home learning course includes telephone or email support.