

Infection Prevention and Control

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If you need your information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact Customer Care on 0800 374 208 or send an email to: customer care@salisbury.nhs.uk

You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

Please complete The Friends & Family Test to tell us about your experience at: www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily or download our App from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

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Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust considers the reduction of healthcare associated infections a high priority. Patients, their relatives and carers may be worried about infection when coming into hospital for an operation or investigation. Patients are vulnerable due to a combination of factors, including their illness and treatment.

We need your help to reduce the risk of healthcare associated infections. By working as a team, staff, patients and visitors can make a difference and reduce this risk.

Hand hygiene

The single most important way of reducing infection is by effective hand hygiene. Bacteria and viruses, which can cause infection, can be carried on our hands. They can be passed from person to person, or by objects or equipment that have been handled by someone who has not cleaned their hands.

Effective hand hygiene needs to be carried out by everyone, not only hospital staff, but also patients and visitors. Please do not be afraid to ask any member of staff if they have cleaned their hands.

The best way to clean your hands is to wash them using soap and water. Liquid soap and disposable paper towels are provided at the hand washing basins in the wards and outpatient departments.

Hands should be washed:

- on entering and leaving a ward or department
- between contact with other patients
- before eating a snack or meal
- after using the toilet, bathroom or commode
- when your hands look dirty.

Alcohol handrub gel is an alternative to using soap and water to clean your hands. Gel dispensers are located at the entrances to all wards and departments; look out for the 'gel stations' with brightly coloured backgrounds. Gel dispensers are also widely available inside the wards and departments. Alcohol handrub gel is effective to use on hands that look clean as it acts as a disinfectant. If your hands look dirty you should wash them using soap and water.

Patients with symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting should use soap and water to wash their hands before using the alcohol handrub gel.

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This is because soap and water is more effective against diarrhoea and vomiting than using the alcohol handrub gel on its own.

When cleaning your hands using either soap and water or the alcohol handrub gel, there are simple steps to follow to ensure that hands are cleaned properly:



1. Palm to palm



2. Back of each hand



3. Palm to palm with fingers interlaced



4. Backs of fingers to opposing palms



5. Rubbing finger tips on palm of hand.



6. Rotational rubbing of the thumbs and inclusion of the wrists.

Standard precautions

This term covers the care we use when looking after all patients regardless of their diagnosis, and is designed to reduce the risk of transferring potentially harmful germs. Staff will wear personal protective equipment when they are likely to be in contact with blood and/or body fluids. They should always wear a disposable plastic apron and gloves when doing this, but sometimes staff will wear face masks and eye protection as well.

Isolation precautions

Sometimes patients have to be nursed in isolation. Isolation nursing is also called barrier nursing, and is carried out either in a single room, or in a bay where a group of patients are isolated together. The person in charge will be able to explain why isolation is needed.

Staff will wear disposable plastic aprons and gloves when giving direct care to patient(s) in isolation. Before leaving the isolation room staff will throw these items away and wash their hands. Visitors do not routinely need to wear disposable aprons and gloves unless they are involved in giving direct care to the patient. The person in charge of the ward will tell you what you need to do.

Another leaflet called 'Now that I am in isolation' is also available; please ask the staff if you would like a copy or have any concerns.

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The environment

You can help us to keep the wards and outpatient areas clean and tidy. Flowers are a traditional gift for people in hospital, but can make it difficult for housekeeping staff to clean. Lockers and bedside tables need to be kept free of clutter. Rubbish should be thrown away into the correct waste bins.

If you have concerns about cleanliness please speak to the person in charge of the ward or department.

Advice for patients

- change your clothes every day and wear slippers or shoes to protect your feet
- use liquid soap and disposable wipes instead of flannels
- have a supply of tissues and moist hand wipes
- keep all food covered and use containers that have lids
- keep dressings on wounds clean and dry. Tell the staff if they become soiled or wet.

Advice for visitors

- clean your hands on entering and leaving the ward
- use the chairs provided and do not sit or lie on the bed
- try to stagger the visiting and have only two people with the patient at any time
- if young children need to visit, do not let them crawl on the floor or climb on the bed. Some wards may have specific guidance about children visiting
- check with the person in charge before bringing in food for patients. Any food that needs to be kept in the refrigerator should be marked with the date and name of the patient
- if you help another patient remember to clean your hands afterwards
- if you are coughing and sneezing or feeling unwell, please do not visit
- if you have flu-like symptoms, do not visit until 48 hours after the last symptoms have passed
- if you have diarrhoea or vomiting, do not visit until 48 hours after the last symptoms have passed
- if you are visiting more than one person in hospital, visit the person in isolation last.

Any questions?

Please speak to the person in charge of the ward or department if you have any questions or comments. The Infection Prevention and Control Team can be contacted on the number below.

Useful websites

www.dh.gov.uk

www.nhs.uk

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