



8. Shower as frequently as you are able to and change into clean clothes regularly. If you need help to do this please ask a nurse to help.
9. Ask your friends and relatives not to visit in large groups and ask them not to visit if they are unwell.
10. Some wards do not allow flowers as they can make the area difficult to keep clean. Please check with the nurse in charge.
11. Do not share personal items or equipment with other patients unless it has been cleaned
12. Ask your visitors to perform hand hygiene by washing their hands thoroughly before entering and when leaving the ward and not to sit on your bed or use the patient's toilets.
13. Non-perishable items of food can be brought in for you by your friends and relatives. For perishable items of food – please ask the nurse in charge

Further information

The Infection Prevention and Control Team 02380 874291 / 02380 874658

Public Health England: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england

Department of health: www.gov.uk

This information is available in other formats and languages including large print, braille and audio.

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Quality care, when and where you need it

Infection Prevention and Control

Advice for patients





Together we can fight infection

Healthcare associated infections (HCAI) can be introduced and spread by patients and visitors. This leaflet explains how you can help the staff to reduce them and provide a clean and safe environment in which to care for patients.

If you are admitted to one of our hospitals you are no longer in your familiar surroundings and may be sharing a ward with other patients. You may be vulnerable to infections because of your illness, surgery or medication and being in hospital will expose you to other people's germs.

What happens if I get an infection?

If your infection requires it, you may be moved into a single room. Do not worry as this is the way of treating you more effectively and protecting patients. Your nurse will explain to you why you are being moved and what will happen. Please ask about your condition and treatment so you can understand how you can comply with your treatment.

Can my visitors get infections?

If your visitors follow basic precautions they will protect themselves to a large extent. A leaflet for visitors is available – please ask a member of staff.

Visitors can help protect themselves by performing hand hygiene. In most instances using the alcohol gel will be sufficient. However hand washing with soap and water is necessary in cases of *Clostridium difficile*, or during outbreaks of viral diarrhoea and vomiting.

Your visitors should carry out hand hygiene:

- Before entering the ward
- After leaving the ward
- After helping to take care of you

Patient checklist

1. Do not touch your wound or any device that is in your arm/leg/bladder or any other body cavity eg a catheter
2. Do not take off your dressing to show your wounds to visitors
3. Always wash your hands after visiting the toilet and before you eat. If you need help please ask a nurse to help you.
4. If you have a drip in your arm (cannula), please inform your nurse if you have any redness, pain or swelling around the site.
5. Try and keep the space around you tidy and uncluttered so that the cleaning staff can clean all surfaces to remove dust easily.
6. Please tell your nurse if you are concerned about cleanliness on the ward.
7. Please remind staff about hand hygiene if they forget. Don't worry about offending them. Some may use the alcohol hand rub nearby as in most cases this cleans hands just as well as washing them.