INFECTION CONTROL & OSHA STANDARDS

Infection Control Overview
There is an effective MidAmerica Division wide program for the surveillance, prevention and control of infection. A coordinated process is used to reduce the risks of endemic and epidemic hospital associated infections in patients and health care workers, which is based on sound epidemiologic principles and research. The key to reduce the spread of infection is the practice of hand hygiene. Wherever you work, you can protect your patients and yourself from hospital acquired infections by washing your hands or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Practice Hand Hygiene
WHAT: Soap and Water

WHEN:
- Hands are visibly soiled
- Before entering a room for patient care.
- Between patient contacts
- After touching environmental surfaces or equipment
- After sneezing, coughing, or blowing your nose
- After using the bathroom
- Before and after eating, handling food, or smoking

WHAT: Alcohol based Instant Hand Sanitizer

WHEN:
- Before entering a room for patient care.
- Between patient contacts
- After touching environmental surfaces or equipment
- After sneezing coughing, or blowing your nose
- After using the bathroom
- Before and after eating, handling food, or smoking
- Before and after any invasive procedure.

OSHA
BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS
Eating, drinking, applying cosmetics or lip balm, and handling contact lenses is prohibited in work areas where there is a likelihood of occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials. All contaminated items will be cleaned and disinfected with a hospital approved disinfectant before use on another patient. Spills of blood or body substances must be cleaned up immediately and the area disinfected with a hospital-approved disinfectant.

PROTECTIVE PERSONAL EQUIPMENT (PPE)
Gowns, gloves, masks, eyewear, and other protective apparel are available and must be worn whenever there is reasonable anticipation of exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials. Clothing penetrated by blood or other potentially infectious materials must be removed immediately.
TUBERCULOSIS
Quick identification, evaluation and treatment of potential tuberculosis patients are essential to minimize exposure of other patients, staff and families. Patients with known or suspected TB must be kept in a negative pressure room and respiratory precautions maintained at all times. The door to the isolation room must be closed to maintain negative air pressure. All persons entering the room must wear a TB mask or respirator. Masks may vary from one facility to the next. Special fit testing and a fit check must be done before wearing the respirator.

C.DIFF
*Clostridium difficile* [pronounced Klo-STRID-ee-um dif-uh-SEEL], also known as “C. diff” [See-dif], is a germ that can cause diarrhea. Most cases of *C. diff* infection occur in patients taking antibiotics. The most common symptoms of a *C. diff* infection include:

- Watery diarrhea
- Fever
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea, belly pain and tenderness

Who is most likely to get *C. diff* infection?
The elderly and people with certain medical problems have the greatest chance of getting *C. diff*. *C. diff* spores can live outside the human body for a very long time and may be found on things in the environment such as bed linens, bed rails, bathroom fixtures, and medical equipment. *C. diff* infection can spread from person-to-person on contaminated equipment and on the hands of doctors, nurses, other healthcare providers and visitors.

What are some of the things that our hospitals are doing to prevent *C. diff* infections?
To prevent *C. diff* infections, healthcare providers should:

- **Clean their hands** with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before and after caring for every patient. This can prevent *C. diff* and other germs from being passed from one patient to another on their hands.
- Carefully **clean hospital rooms and medical equipment** that have been used for patients with *C. diff*.
- Use **Contact Precautions** to prevent *C. diff* from spreading to other patients. Contact Precautions mean:
  - Whenever possible, patients with *C. diff* will have a single room or share a room only with someone else with *C. diff*.
  - Healthcare providers will put on gloves and wear a gown over their clothing while taking care of patients with *C. diff*.
  - Visitors may also be asked to wear a gown and gloves.
  - When leaving the room, hospital providers and visitors remove their gown and gloves and clean their hands.

MRSA
*Staphylococcus aureus* (pronounced staff-ill-oh-KOK-us AW-ree-us), or “*Staph*” is a very common germ that about 1 out of every 3 people have on their skin or in their nose. This germ does not cause any problems for most people who have it on their skin. But sometimes it can cause serious infections such as skin or wound infections, pneumonia, or infections of the blood. Antibiotics are given to kill Staph germs when they cause infections. Some *Staph* is resistant, meaning they cannot be killed by some antibiotics. “*Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus*” or “MRSA” is a type of *Staph* that is resistant to some of the antibiotics that are often used to treat *Staph* infections.
**Who is most likely to get an MRSA infection?**
In the hospital, people who are more likely to get an MRSA infection are people who:

- have other health conditions making them sick.
- have been in the hospital or a nursing home.
- have been treated with antibiotic.

People who are healthy and who have not been in the hospital or a nursing home can also get MRSA infections. These infections usually involve the skin. More information about this type of MRSA infection, known as “community-associated MRSA” infection, is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [http://www.cdc.gov/mrsa](http://www.cdc.gov/mrsa)

**What are some of the things our hospitals are doing to prevent MRSA infections?**
To prevent MRSA infections, healthcare providers should:

- **Clean their hands** with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before and after caring for every patient.
- Carefully clean hospital rooms and medical equipment.
- Use **Contact Precautions** when caring for patients with MRSA. Contact Precautions mean: > Whenever possible, patients with MRSA will have a single room or will share a room only with someone else who also has MRSA. > Healthcare providers will put on gloves and wear a gown over their clothing while taking care of patients with MRSA.