

WHEN SHOULD I CLEAN MY HANDS?

- before touching or eating food
- after you have gone to the bathroom/toilet
- after sneezing, coughing or disposing of tissues
- before touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- after handling dirty clothes or linen
- before and after touching a wound or its dressing

IF YOU ARE A VISITOR OR CARER?

- Do not attend our clinic if you feel unwell or have a cold, have been vomiting or had diarrhoea. Wait until you feel better.
- Clean your hands with alcohol based hand rub or soap and water before attending with friends/relatives, and before leaving our branch.
- Avoid bringing too many visitors at one time to imaging examinations. In most cases, it is not appropriate or safe for visitors to be in the medical imaging examination room.
- Be careful not to touch dressings, drips or other equipment around the patient.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HAI?

Please speak to the staff member looking after you or your family.

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HAI?

SKG Radiology's Infection Control Coordinator is able to provide additional information on request. Please approach one of our friendly staff members to assist.

Consumer guides are also available on specific healthcare associated infections such as Methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and vancomycin resistant enterococci (VRE) and Clostridium difficile from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) websites.

www.nhmrc.gov.au

www.safetyandquality.gov.au

REFERENCES

NHMRC (2010) Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare – www.nhmrc.gov.au

Hand Hygiene Australia (2008) Health Care Associated Infections – www.hha.org.au/ForConsumers/FactSheets.aspx#HCAI

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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www.skg.com.au

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SKG RADIOLOGY & INFECTION CONTROL

HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATED INFECTIONS CONSUMER FACTSHEET



SKG Radiology is committed to providing the highest quality and safest clinical care for our patients. Our clinical staff are assessed by our Nurse Trainer for hand hygiene and aseptic technique competency.

SKG Radiology acknowledges the content in this brochure is sourced from the National Health and Medical Research Council Healthcare Associated Infections Consumer Factsheet.

WHAT ARE HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATED INFECTIONS?

Although health professionals try to give the best possible care, sometimes things can go wrong and patients can get an infection.

Healthcare associated infections (HAI) are infections that occur as a result of healthcare interventions and are caused by micro-organisms—such as bacteria and viruses.

They can happen when you are being treated in hospital, at home, in a GP clinic, nursing home or any other healthcare facility.

HOW DO THEY HAPPEN?

Some infections occur after an invasive procedure such as surgery and can be treated easily with antibiotics. There are some infections such as Methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), Vancomycin resistant enterococci (VRE) and diarrhoeal diseases such as Clostridium difficile that are more difficult to treat because they are resistant to certain antibiotics.

The risk of getting these infections depends on how healthy you are, how long you have been in hospital if you are an inpatient, and certain medications that you

take (including some antibiotics).

These specific infections require the use of special antibiotics and, at times, special precautions which may include placement in a single room and the use of personal protective equipment such as gloves and gowns.

CAN THEY BE PREVENTED?

Although it is a great challenge, there are a number of things that can be done to prevent healthcare associated infections.

SKG Radiology uses a range of procedures, policies and structures to reduce the risk of infection. You will see our clinical staff do the following things to prevent and control the spread of infection:

- washing hands with soap or using alcohol based hand rubs
- maintaining a clean environment
- wearing personal protective equipment such as gloves, gowns, masks and goggles
- isolating people who have an infective illness
- using sterilised equipment (in most cases, this equipment is single-patient use)



WHAT CAN I DO?

Everyone, including healthcare workers, patients and visitors, has a role in preventing and controlling healthcare associated infection.

There are a number of things you can do to reduce the risk of infection:

- The best way to prevent infections is to clean your hands carefully with soap and water or use an alcohol based hand rub.
- Do not be afraid to ask any healthcare worker if they have cleaned their hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze (or into your elbow if you don't have a tissue) and clean your hands afterwards.
- Report any infections you have had before undergoing interventional procedures, especially if you are still on antibiotics.
- Make sure you take the full course of any antibiotics you are given, even if you are feeling better.
- If you have a dressing applied after your examination, keep the skin around the dressing clean and dry. Let the doctor who is looking after you know, or contact us promptly if it becomes loose or wet.
- Tell the doctor who is looking after you, or contact us, if any drips, lines, tubes or drains we have inserted into your body or the area around them become red, swollen or painful.
- Follow instructions you are given on looking after wounds or medical devices you have. Ask if you are not sure of what to do.
- Let the staff member who is looking after you know if the room or equipment hasn't been cleaned properly.
- Stop smoking before interventional procedures, as smoking increases the risk of infection.