

Urinary Catheter Use

A urinary catheter is a tube that is inserted into the bladder to drain urine. Urinary catheters can be very beneficial following surgery if an individual cannot urinate, or if urine remains in the bladder after urination. Urinary catheters should never be used as a convenience.

A urinary tract infection is an infection in the urinary system, including the bladder and kidneys. With a catheter in place, germs can travel along the catheter to the bladder and kidneys and cause infection, called catheter-associated urinary tract infection.

Ask if the catheter is necessary and if placed, ask to have it removed as soon as possible.

Remember to use hand hygiene when handling or caring for your catheter.

Antibiotic Use

Antibiotics can prevent infections from developing or becoming worse. A healthy body requires the presence of some germs. Antibiotics can destroy not only the “bad” germs, but also the “good” germs. When this happens, you are less able to fight off infections. Discuss antibiotic use with your doctor and remember, antibiotics do not work for viruses.

You have a role in infection prevention!

- Use hand hygiene. Ask health-care workers and visitors to wash their hands.
- Speak up if you have concerns.
- Ask if you have questions!
- Know the signs of infection.
- Clean and disinfect your surroundings.
- Discuss antibiotic use.
- Avoid unnecessary catheter use.

Be active in your care!



For more information, visit the
North Dakota Department of Health
website at:
www.ndhealth.gov/disease/hai/

Prevention tips for

HAI (Healthcare- Associated Infections)



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HAIs

Healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) are infections that a person may get during the course of receiving treatment for another condition. HAIs are caused by germs and can be the result of germs being passed from an infected person, the environment, or being passed from one part of a person to another part of the same person.

HAIs can happen wherever care is provided, such as hospitals, nursing homes, surgery centers, dialysis centers, outpatient clinics or even in your home.

Hand hygiene is the primary way to prevent HAIs for patients, residents and health-care workers.

Everyone needs to know their role in identifying risks and taking steps to prevent infections.

Maintain a Clean Environment

Keep the area and items around you clean and disinfected. This is especially important for “high touch” areas:

- Door knobs and handles
- Call buttons and TV remotes
- Phones
- Chair arms
- Over-bed tables
- Sinks, faucets and soap dispensers
- Medical equipment such as IV poles, pumps, wheelchairs, etc.

Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene means washing your hands with soap and water or using hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizer usually works well to kill germs, but certain germs like *Clostridium difficile* are more effectively removed with soap and water.

To prevent the spread of infection, you and your visitors should use hand hygiene:

- Before eating.
- After using the bathroom.
- After touching another person or yourself.
- After contact with “high touch” areas.
- After sneezing or coughing.

Your health-care worker/caregiver should use hand hygiene:

- Before touching you.
- Before providing care to you.
- After touching blood or bodily fluids.
- After touching you.
- After completing a procedure.
- After touching your surroundings.

Hand Washing Procedure

1. Wet hands with water.
2. Apply soap to hand surfaces.
3. Rub hands together while rubbing palms together and interlocking fingers for 15-20 seconds.
4. Rinse hands with water.
5. Dry hands thoroughly with a single-use towel, use a towel to turn off the faucet.

Signs of Infection

Being informed, alert and taking action in situations that can cause infection will help keep you safe. Tell your health-care providers about changes or problems with your health.

Be aware of your own risks for infection. Know the signs of infection:

- Redness or warmth around a wound
- Swelling or yellow/green/grayish pus from a wound
- Fever and chills
- Nausea
- Large amounts of watery diarrhea
- New feelings of confusion or agitation
- Joint aches
- Rapid heart rate

Caregivers and family should wear personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, masks, gowns and goggles if recommended.

Talk to your health-care provider about getting vaccinated against the flu !!

