

## Infection Prevention at UF Health

### Frequently Asked Questions

Today's focus is on preventing infections in the hospital setting. We all have a personal responsibility to follow policies, procedures and practices designed to reduce the risk of a health care associated infection.

**What is Infection Prevention?** Infection prevention focuses on implementing evidence based practices that reduce the risk of transmitting, or acquiring an infection. Some of these include:

- The use of appropriate hand hygiene
- The use of appropriate isolation practices and personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Prevention of multi-drug resistant organisms (MDRO's)
- Prevention of central line related infections
- Preventing infections of the urinary track caused by catheters
- Preventing surgical site infections

**Hand Hygiene** - The single most important factor for preventing the spread of infection is proper hand hygiene. Hands should be cleaned before and after each direct patient and when gloves are removed. Current CDC guidelines recommend the use of:

- Alcohol-based hand rubs for routine decontamination of hands between patient contacts when hands are not visibly soiled
- Soap and water for visibly soiled hands or after caring for patients with *Clostridium difficile*

**Environmental Hygiene** refers to keeping the environment of care clean. Tips to help in this area include:

- Medical equipment should be properly cleaned, disinfected or sterilized after each use
- Properly clean high touch surfaces with a hospital approved disinfectant and allow surface to remain wet for appropriate time as per label instructions
- There should be no visible dust or soiling
- Dispose safely of clinical waste in designated containers
- Follow appropriate guidelines for kitchen and food hygiene
- Maintain an adequate pest control program

**Antibiotic Use** – The more often antibiotics are used, the more they adapt and over time develop resistance to the intended effects of the antibiotics. Resistant organisms such as MRSA and VRE are common but more organisms such as *E. coli* and *Klebsiella spp.* are becoming resistant.

**Personal Responsibility** – All members of the health care team have a responsibility for infection prevention and control. Get your flu vaccine annually, cover your cough if you have one and stay home if you are sick.