

Community Infection Prevention and Control

Patient and Carer
Information



Caring, Learning
& Growing Together



A community patient receives NHS care outside hospital.

This leaflet explains how patients and carers can stop infections.

What is Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)?

It's a way of life: the use of systems to avoid and reduce illnesses. Good standards are for everyone's health and safety.

What causes infections?

Germs are everywhere; they get on our hands when we touch people, food, surfaces, and bodily fluids.

Infections happen when germs enter the body:

- Through a wound or cut
- When we breathe – for example when we catch a cold
- When we eat – for example if bacteria is on our fingers
- Through devices put into the body - a tube into a vein or the bladder, for example.

Some people can be more vulnerable to infection for a number of reasons, including:

- Mental or physical health problems
- Recent substance and or alcohol misuse
- Medical treatments, including operations
- Being a younger or an older person
- Weakened immune system

What's a healthcare associated infection (HCAI)?

HCAIs develop from health treatments and from contact with healthcare settings. Common HCAIs include MRSA and C. diff.

If you need more information, please ask the healthcare worker looking after you.

What do we do to prevent HCAIs?

We work hard to make sure we provide a safe and clean environment for patients, visitors and staff.

Staff are trained on IPC often.

We promote hand hygiene (washing and sanitiser) and make it easy for patients to do this.



How can you help to prevent infection?

Tell your healthcare worker if:

- (a) You've had breathing problems or diarrhoea or a vomiting illness recently
- (b) You've been in contact with anyone who's been ill.

- If you have a C. diff card, please show it to your health worker.
- Wash your hands with soap and water after using toilet facilities and before eating.
- Avoid touching your dressings or wounds. If a dressing is loose or soiled, please tell your health worker.
- Discuss any concerns with your healthcare worker.

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Publication Date: May 2025
Review Date: May 2027