



- Disposing of tissues in the nearest bin after use
- Coughing or sneezing into the inner elbow rather than the hand if no tissues are available
- Keeping contaminated hands away from the eyes and nose
- Cleaning your hands after contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects/materials

communicable diseases and immunisations on their website.

'You've Got What?' is a publication containing information in alphabetical order on infectious and communicable diseases. There is also a link to infectious, communicable disease and immunisation information in other languages. This information can be accessed at:

You've Got What? S.A. Health

www.sahealth.sa.gov.au

REFERENCES

Government of South Australia. Communicable Disease Control Branch. Infection Control Service (2009). Fact Sheet: Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette.

[Wash, Wipe, Cover Information Resources](#) S.A. Health

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Hand Hygiene Australia (HHA). Information for Patients and Visitors. <http://hha.org.au/> Accessed 6/2/12

National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) (2010). Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare. Commonwealth of Australia.

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Feedback was provided by consumers in the review of this brochure

Testing for Antibiotic Resistant Germs

You may be asked to have a swab taken to test for antibiotic resistant germs called Methicillin/Multi-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* 'MRSA' or Vancomycin Resistant Enterococci or 'VRE.' These germs are monitored because they can spread to other patients. While they are not usually harmful to healthy people, they can cause problems for those who are seriously ill. If you would like more information on antibiotic resistant germs, please ask the staff for the specific patient brochures about testing for these germs.

If you have or are suspected of having an infectious condition, a single room with private bathroom will be allocated to you and the staff caring for you will clean their hands, wear gowns, gloves, and a mask (if required) whilst attending you until such time as you are no longer infectious. During this time you should not visit other patients in the hospital.

Infectious and Communicable Disease Information

The Department of Health, South Australia provides information on infectious and

INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL

General Information for Patients and Visitors

The information contained within this publication is a guide only. Readers should seek and follow the medical advice provided by their own doctor.

St Andrew's Hospital is committed to providing the safest possible care to you while you are a patient. Providing education and information on how to prevent the spread of infection is one of the ways we can do this. We also monitor both patient specific and hospital infections and antibiotic resistant germs

Infection can be spread in several ways:

- Contact transmission
- Direct contact -body surface to body surface
- Indirect contact -body surface contact with a contaminated object
- Droplet transmission – occurs when droplets containing microorganisms, from an infected person are propelled through the air and land on the eyes, mouth or nose of another person.
- Airborne transmission – results when airborne droplets containing microorganisms evaporates and remains suspended in the air for a long time
- Common Vehicle transfer - contaminated items such as food, water, medications, devices and equipment.

Preventing the Spread of Germs in Hospital

Visitors

We ask that your friends and family not visit you if they are suffering from any infectious illness until they are well.

This may include but is not limited to:

- Cough/cold or sore throat
- Flu like symptoms

- Shingles
- Conjunctivitis
- Whooping cough (pertussis)
- An upset stomach (diarrhoea/vomiting)
- Skin infections
- Head lice
- Measles
- Impetigo (school sores)
- Chickenpox
- Scabies
- Mumps
- Tuberculosis (TB)
- Cold sore

Visitors are asked to clean their hands on entering and leaving patients' rooms.

Patient

You can help prevent the spread of germs by:

- Cleaning your hands after touching your face or nose, after blowing your nose, smoking, going to the toilet and before eating
- Not touching your wound, drip site or any other medical device attached to you
- Avoiding visiting and touching other patients
- Cleaning your hands before leaving your room

Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene is the simplest way to prevent the spread of germs. Our hands may look clean but germs are invisible. We can unknowingly spread germs on our hands to others and our environment.

Hands can be cleaned by washing with soap and water or by using the alcohol based hand rubs available.

In general, hands should be cleaned:

- After going to the toilet
- After blowing your nose
- After smoking
- After handling/patting animals
- Before, during and after food preparation
- Before eating
- When your hands are visibly dirty

St Andrew's Hospital values the importance of hand hygiene in preventing the spread of germs to our patients, staff and visitors. We support the Hand Hygiene Australia (HHA) hand hygiene programme to monitor hand hygiene practices of our staff. Please refer to the graphs next to the main hospital lifts demonstrating rates of hand hygiene at St Andrew's Hospital.

Respiratory Hygiene and Cough Etiquette

Respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette will help prevent the spread of germs even if you don't have an infection. Covering sneezes and coughs prevents infected persons from spreading respiratory secretions into the air. Cleaning your hands after coughing, sneezing, using tissues or after contact with respiratory secretions or objects will also prevent the spread of germs.

This can be done by:

- Covering the nose and mouth with disposable, single-use tissues when coughing, sneezing, wiping and blowing nose