About Us

RID is a nationwide, nonprofit educational campaign to empower patients and caregivers to stop the scourge of hospital infections.

Whether you are preparing for childbirth, elective surgery, hip or knee replacement or another procedure, RID's 15 Steps can help reduce your risk of a healthcare infection.

RID has only one goal – to save lives!



Infection Statistics

- **1.7 million** infections per year.
- **99 thousand** deaths from hospital infections per year.
- Patients who get a hospital infection are **2X** as likely to die.
- Patients who get a hospital infection spend **6.5** days more in the hospital.

Please Support RID's Efforts

RID is a nonprofit that depends on donations from people like you. Please send a tax deductible donation to Committee to Reduce Infection Deaths.

5 Partridge Hollow Road, Greenwich, CT, 06831
or visit us
at our website: www.hospitalinfection.org

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REDUCE your RISK



Pre-Hospital Infection Prevention Kit

RID offers a Pre-Hospital Infection Prevention Kit with the tools you will need to follow the 15 Steps, including chlorhexidine soap for pre-surgical bathing.

You can order the kit at
www.hospitalinfection.org

15 STEPS

You can take to reduce your risk of getting a hospital infection.

Before Your Stay.

1] If you are having surgery (including having your baby by Caesarean section), review this list with your surgeon at least one week before your surgery.

2] Beginning three to five days before surgery, shower or bathe daily with chlorhexidine soap. Various brands can be bought without a prescription. It will help remove any dangerous bacteria you may be carrying on your skin.

3] Ask your surgeon to have you tested for methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) at least one week before you come into the hospital. If you have it, extra precautions can be taken to protect you from infection.



4] Stop smoking well in advance of your surgery.
Patients who smoke are three times as likely to develop a surgical site infection as nonsmokers.

5] If you are visiting a friend or loved one in the hospital, don't bother bringing candy and flowers. Instead, bring a canister of bleach wipes. Wiping down surfaces around the bed, including bedrails, call button and television controls, will remove dangerous bacteria that could cause an infection.

6] Do not shave the surgical site. Razors can create small nicks in the skin, through which bacteria can enter. If hair must be removed, ask that clippers be used.

During & After Your Hospital Stay

7] Ask that hospital staff clean their hands before treating you, and ask visitors to clean their hands too. This is the single most important way to protect yourself in the hospital. If you're worried about being too aggressive, just remember your life could be at stake. Don't be falsely assured by gloves. If caregivers have pulled on gloves without cleaning their hands first, the gloves are already contaminated before they touch you.

8] Avoid a urinary tract catheter if possible. It is a common cause of infection. If you have a catheter, ask your caregiver to remove it as soon as possible.

9] If you must have an IV, make sure that it's inserted and removed under clean conditions and changed every 3 to 4 days. Your skin should be cleaned at the site of insertion, and the person treating you should be wearing clean gloves. Alert hospital staff immediately if any redness appears.

10] On the day of your operation, remind your doctor that you may need an antibiotic one hour before the first incision. For many types of surgery, a pre-surgical antibiotic is the standard of care.

11] Ask your doctor about keeping you warm during surgery. This can be done with special blankets, hats and booties, and warmed IV liquids.



During & After Your Hospital Stay

12] If you need a "central line" catheter, ask your doctor about the benefits of one that is antibiotic-impregnated or silverchlorhexidine coated to reduce infections

13] To prevent C. diff, the most common infection, avoid touching your hands to your mouth and do not set foods or utensils on any surface except a clean plate. C. diff germs frequently contaminate tables, bed linens, call buttons and other surfaces near your bed and they are easily picked up on your hands. These germs can cause C. Diff if they enter your mouth.



14] To avoid pneumonia, keep your head elevated while in bed. Also ask for deep breathing exercises or a spirometer, and request that your mouth be cleaned daily to avoid a build-up of bacteria that could be aspirated into your lungs.

15] When you are discharged. leave behind gifts, pillows, stuffed animals and other nonessential items that have likely become heavily contaminated with hospital germs. You don't want to bring those germs home with you.