

CIRCULAR LETTER ADDRESSED TO PATIENTS ABOUT HOSPITAL INFECTIONS

Hospital Infections (also defined as ICA, i.e. Healthcare Associated Infection) are infections acquired from a patient during their permanence at the hospital. They are caused by microorganisms (bacteria, fungi, viruses and other transmissible agents).

Even though they can be reduced, they cannot be completely eliminated and in order to contain them it is necessary to implement prevention and control programs that are managed by specialised medical and nursing staff.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HOSPITAL INFECTIONS

- On the basis of numerous studies conducted in Italy, it can be estimated that 5-10% of hospitalised patients might contract a hospital-acquired infection.
- They are the consequence of the progressive introduction of new health care technologies that, while ensuring the survival of patients with serious diseases and therefore at high risk of complications, also allow microorganisms to enter even normally sterile body sites. Another crucial element to consider is the emergence of antibiotic-resistant bacterial strains, given the widespread use of these drugs for prophylactic or therapeutic purposes.
- Not all patients have the same risk of hospital-acquired infection. Several factors come into play such as age, length of hospitalisation, coexistence of multiple conditions and their severity, having undergone surgery, artificial breathing, use of invasive medical devices (insertion of prostheses and synthetic media, insertion of vascular catheter, urinary catheterisation, etc..).
- The main mechanisms of transmission of these infections are:
 - direct contact between a healthy person and an infected one, especially through hands;
 - contact through droplets emitted in the act of coughing or sneezing from an infected person to a susceptible one;
 - indirect contact through a contaminated vehicle, such as the patient's belongings, bedside tables, bed rails, door handles, faucets;
 - by air, microorganisms can survive in the air and are transmitted over distance.
- Some hospital infections can be severe.



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WHAT THE HOSPITAL DOES TO CONTROL INFECTIONS

- Inside the Hospital a dedicated Committee (CICA, Committee for the Healthcare Associated Infections Control), consisting of medical and nursing personnel from the Healthcare Management Department and from the several medical and surgical specialities, has the assignment to coordinate and carry out the programs defined within the company and the region for the supervision and control of the risk of infection correlated to assistance.
- A team of specifically trained doctors and nurses identified by CICA are constantly at work to ensure that prevention measures are properly implemented.
- Preventative measures for Hospital Infections are held in law and in the national and international Guide Lines. The staff responsible for controlling the infection risk oversee compliance across the "Michele and Pietro Ferrero" hospital - Verduno and the other units belonging to the CN2 ASL.
- It is imperative that you and the people coming to visit and assist you comply with the preventive measures indicated by the health care personnel. In some cases it may be necessary, as a precaution, to isolate those who have contracted an infection to avoid transmitting it to other patients; physicians and health care workers will need to adopt strict working procedures.
- It is necessary to avoid overcrowding at the patient's bedside, which not only fatigues the patient but also increases the risk of hospital infections.
- Every hospitalised patient is given this information sheet that contains information about the risk of hospital-acquired infections;
- The hospital participates in a regional-national network that collects data on the frequency of hospital infections. This data verifies that the interventions implemented fall within nationally and internationally accepted standards. In this regard, your cooperation and willingness to be contacted after discharge from the hospital may be required.

Please feel free to contact our medical and nursing personnel for further information on infectious risk and effective preventative measures.

Local health corporation participates in CSIA surveillance on consumption of hydroalcoholic hands hygiene solution in health care facilities.

The Responsible of the S.S. Prevention Infections Hospital
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