

# Infection prevention and control for families

**Information about how you can help us minimise the risk of infections while your child is in hospital. If you have any questions, please speak to the nurse caring for your child.**

Children and young people can be at a higher risk of getting an infection when they are ill. The body has natural defence mechanisms to fight off infections, but these might be affected when someone is ill.

For example, when a child has an operation, the surgical wound means that the natural skin barrier is broken. This could allow germs (bacteria and viruses) to enter the body. Germs might come from other patients, staff, visitors (including family), equipment, or the environment.

This information explains things we can all do to help to prevent infections.

## Hand hygiene

### **What we do**

- All our staff have been trained in hand hygiene.
- We expect all staff to wash their hands, or use the alcohol hand rub on their hands, before and after having contact with your child.
- Every month, we check that everyone is following our hand hygiene protocol.

### **What you can do (and your visitors can do too)**

- If you are not sure if a staff member has cleaned their hands, it is OK for you to ask.
- Make sure that your child washes their hands before meals, and after using the toilet.
- Make sure that you wash your hands before and after visiting your child, before meals or feeding your child, after visiting the toilet, and after changing your child's nappy or helping them use the toilet or bed pan.



# WASH YOUR HANDS!

Wash your hands with us like this:



**WET** both hands.



**PUSH** Soaperhero button once for a squirt of foam soap.



Rub the front of your hands together.



Rub in between your fingers and thumbs.



Rub the back of each hand.



Rub your **FINGERTIPS** on the front of each hand.



Rub each **THUMB** with your other hand.



Rub each **WRIST** with your other hand.



**WASH** off all the soap bubbles.



**DRY** your hands really well.



[www.debgroup.com](http://www.debgroup.com)

## Monitoring

### What we do

We test all patients for some germs that are resistant to common antibiotics, such as MRSA. The test is done by taking swabs from the nose, throat and groin. We might also need to do a rectal (bottom) swab to check for other organisms, if your child:

- is admitted to a critical care area
- has had admission to any hospital in the last 12 months

If your child is carrying a germ that is resistant to common antibiotics, we will nurse them using isolation precautions, in a single room or in a bay. Your child's nurse will tell you about any special precautions needed.

### What you can do

If your child has been in contact with someone who has an infectious disease (such as chickenpox, shingles or measles), or has developed a rash or high temperature, you should tell us before you come to the hospital. This will help us prevent it spreading to other children and their families.

If one of your other children has been in contact with someone who has an infectious disease (such as chickenpox, shingles or measles), or has developed a rash or high temperature, do not bring them to visit.



Chickenpox rash

Children who develop chickenpox should stay away from the hospital until the last blister has crusted over. Please speak to the ward staff to check when it is OK for them to visit.

Do not visit or bring in your other children if any of you have infectious symptoms, including diarrhoea, vomiting, a cough, runny nose, fever or a cold. Also, do not visit if you have recently been:

- diagnosed with COVID-19
- identified as a contact of a person who has COVID-19

Tell your visitors that they should not visit if they have symptoms like diarrhoea, vomiting, a cough or a cold.

If you or your family become unwell and are resident in hospital accommodation, such as Ronald McDonald House or Gassiot House, please call the hospital switchboard **phone** 020 7188 7188 and ask for the bleep desk. Ask for bleep 1698 and wait for a response. This will connect you to the children's nurse practitioner who will advise you what to do and where to go for help.

## Environment

### What we do

- We make sure that our wards and departments are clean and tidy.
- We regularly inspect all of our clinical areas.

### What you can do

- Tell the nurse caring for your child, if you think an area or a piece of equipment is not clean enough.
- Keep your child's room or bed area tidy and free from clutter to help our domestic staff to clean the area.

# Isolation

## What we do

If your child has an infection, we might need to nurse them in isolation in a single room, a Rediroom™ (temporary isolation room) or use screens in a bay. The aim is to prevent the germ spreading to other people.

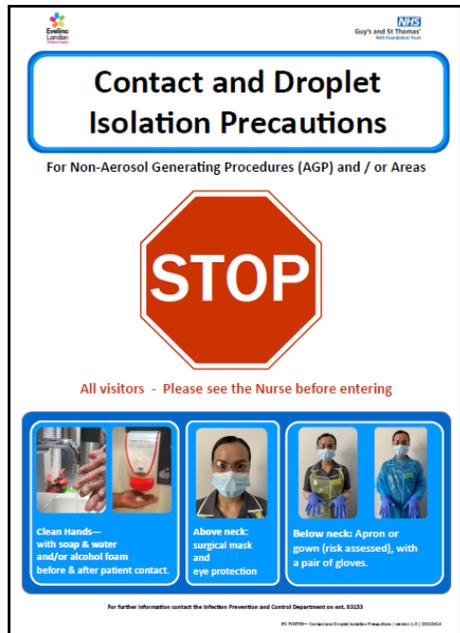
Infections can be passed on in different ways:

- by direct contact with another person, usually by the hands
- indirectly from one person to another by contaminated equipment, toys or the environment
- through the inhalation of airborne droplets, if the infection is airborne, from someone coughing or sneezing

If we need to look after your child in an isolation room, we will explain to you and your child why this is necessary.

Depending on the type of infection, staff might need to wear gloves, an apron or a face mask when looking after your child.

You might see signs like this one.



## What you can do

- Make sure you wash your hands before and after visiting your child, before meals or feeding your child, after visiting the toilet and after changing your child's nappy or helping them use the toilet.
- Wear a fluid-resistant surgical mask which the hospital will provide.
- Make sure that the door of the room is kept closed.
- Make sure that all toys and equipment used for your child are kept in their room and cleaned regularly.
- When they no longer need to be isolated, the toys should stay with them.
- Make sure that your child stays in their room and does not go to any other areas of the ward.
- Do not visit other children and parents on the ward, and make sure that they do not come to visit you.
- Check with the nurse in charge if you can use the parent's room and kitchen on the ward.
- Check with the nurse in charge to see if your other children can come to visit.

## More information

**How to wash your hands video** **web:** [www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/)

**e-bug**, games and teaching resources about microbes and antibiotics, **web:** <http://www.e-bug.eu/>

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the infection prevention and control (IPC) team, **phone:** 020 7188 3153, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

For more information on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **web:** [www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk/leaflets](http://www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk/leaflets)

Adapted with kind permission by the IPC team at Great Ormond Street Hospital

## Evelina London Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's medicines, please speak to the staff caring for them or contact our helpline, **phone:** 020 7188 3003, Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm **email:** [letstalkmedicines@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:letstalkmedicines@gstt.nhs.uk)

## Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), **phone:** 020 7188 8801 **email:** [pals@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.uk).  
To make a complaint contact the resolution department **phone:** 020 7188 3514 **email:** [complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk)

## Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please contact the department your appointment is with.

**Leaflet number: 4651/VER3**

Date published: April 2024

Review date: April 2027

© 2024 Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust  
A list of sources is available on request