

MEDI-BITS

Medi-Waste Tid Bits

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Feature Article — THE IMPORTANCE OF HAND HYGIENE

By: Rose Kreller, APRN, MSN

Those working in healthcare are quite familiar with the basics of infection control and prevention. Similarly, we are aware of the need to reduce transmission of infectious agents. Hand hygiene is the most useful tools in our arsenal against infection transmission. In the US, hospital patients get an estimated 722,000 infections each year. Out-patient settings are increasingly at risk for infection transmission due to the increase in healthcare services offered in the ambulatory setting and the increase in complexity of patients.

Healthcare providers should practice hand hygiene at key points to disrupt the transmission of micro-organisms including: before patient contact, after contact with blood or body fluids or contaminated surfaces (even if gloves are worn), before invasive procedures and after removing gloves.

Washing hands with soap, water and friction is like a do-it-yourself vaccine to reduce the spread of respiratory and diarrheal illness. Steps for proper handwashing include: wet hands with running water, apply soap and lather. Don't forget backs of hands, between fingers and under fingernails. Scrub for 20 seconds then rinse under running water.

(Continued on reverse)

MediMidwest.com—Your One Stop Resource

By: David Kreller

Because of increased regulatory scrutiny of the medical community, including Ebola questions, we noticed our client phone and email communication, along with requests for training have risen significantly. In researching how to help you more effectively, many clients shared that, while they thought they knew the answer to their question, having a resource they could check with quickly or 24/7 would be helpful.

As a result and as noted in the last newsletter, we have introduced our new web domain of www.medimidwest.com. The new site is designed to be a single resource you can connect with quickly or after business hours to help answer questions.

The web site contains information on **training options** including web **links to OSHA and the CDC**, a variety of **blog posts** on professional and personal health items written by our staff. You will also find **contact information** and details on select **service options**. We also have a place for **testimonial quotes** – feel free to contact us if you have something you would like to include.

Of course we enjoy your phone calls and email, and encourage you to reach out to any of our team when you need assistance or research. Helping you is why we are here. With the new web site, you have yet another tool for your compliance toolbox.

FUN FACTS

- ◆ Andrew Jackson was involved in over 100 duels.
- ◆ Average office chairs with wheels travels 8 miles per year.
- ◆ The longest word used by Shakespeare: *honorificabilitudinitatibus*.
- ◆ Sweet’N Low was the one-millionth US Patent trademark.
- ◆ Tendons have half the tensile strength of steel.
- ◆ A newborn ’s brain will triple in weight during the first year of life.
- ◆ Turtles and honeybees are both deaf.
- ◆ Your kidneys process about 40-50 gallons of blood per day.

MEDI PUZZLER

K	K	H	E	N	E	I	G	Y	H	N	X	E	ALCOHOL
E	R	A	C	H	T	L	A	E	H	C	D	C	CDC
X	R	T	R	E	Z	I	T	I	N	A	S	G	GEL
N	O	I	T	N	E	V	E	R	P	S	E	E	GERMS
K	N	O	I	T	C	E	F	N	I	L	Q	R	HANDWASHING
T	R	A	N	S	M	I	S	S	I	O	N	M	HEALTHCARE
Y	G	N	I	H	S	A	W	D	N	A	H	S	HYGIENE
Y	W	A	L	C	O	H	O	L	P	A	O	S	INFECTION
													PREVENTION
													SANITIZER
													SOAP
													TRANSMISSION



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Feature Article — THE IMPORTANCE OF HAND HYGIENE cont.

Unfortunately sinks and soap dispensers are not always available. According to the CDC, the next best option is to use an alcohol based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Sanitizers not only lift germs from hands but also kill a majority of germs on contact. Apply the product to the palm of one hand, rub hands together, rub product over all hand surfaces until they dry. Do not dry with paper towels, allow to air dry. If hands are grossly contaminated, greasy or dirty, hand sanitizers are less effective, so remove debris first if possible.

Hand sanitizers come in a variety of forms including gels, foams and wipes. Certain sanitizers containing quaternary ammonium instead of alcohol are less effective. Certain infectious agents are more resistant to hand sanitizers (such as C. Diff) and require hand washing with soap, water and friction.

Some keys to aid the infection prevention program include developing written hand hygiene policies and procedures with action steps to education, train and update staff; and assure availability of necessary supplies for a proper hand hygiene program.