

for you. If the test shows that you have MRSA, we will contact you to let you know what to do, but it will not affect you coming into hospital for treatment. If you do not hear from us within 10 days of the swab being taken, you can assume that you did not have MRSA.

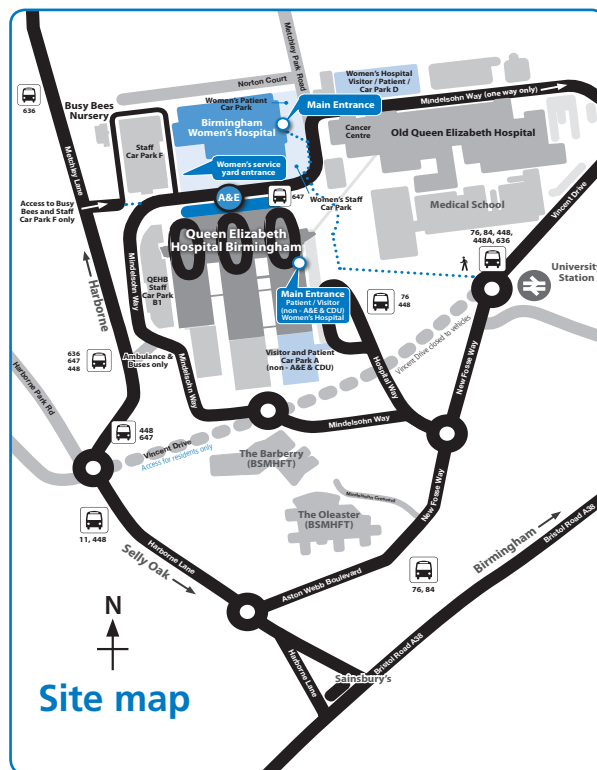
Infectious disease

Some infectious diseases such as chickenpox, diarrhoea and vomiting, measles, mumps, rubella (German measles) and tuberculosis spread very easily in hospital. Some of these diseases can be especially dangerous for pregnant women and babies. It is very important that you tell us if you have one of these diseases, or if you have recently been in contact with someone who does. If in doubt, please ask. We understand that there are some infections that you may not want your friends or family to know about. We will always treat any medical information that you give us in strict confidence.

Family or friends visiting you in hospital can also spread infection. If anyone has an infectious disease, or has recently been in contact with someone who does, please check with ward staff whether it is safe for them to visit.

Further Information

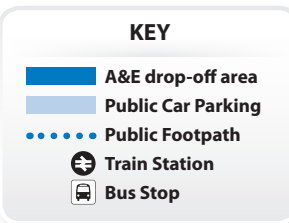
If you have any questions about control of infection in hospitals that ward staff cannot answer, please ask them to arrange for you to see a member of the Infection Control Team.



Birmingham Women's NHS Foundation Trust

Mindelsohn Way
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 2TG
www.bwhct.nhs.uk

Tel: 0121 472 1377
Fax: 0121 627 2602



Ref: 120/02/2011 Review Date: 10/2011
GD10_162 BWH/PI/0120

Authors:

Jane Owen – Director of Infection Control
Dr. J. Gray – Infection Control

Birmingham Women's NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

What we are doing
to prevent and
control healthcare
associated infections

Patient Information

Introduction

Infections that occur in hospitals are called **healthcare associated infections (HCAI)**. Patients in hospital are at greater risk of infection. This is because any illness can make people more prone to infection. Also, childbirth, operations and other treatments affect the body's defences against infection. Bacteria (bugs) spread between patients in hospital cause some HCAI. However, we all carry many millions of bacteria on our own bodies, and these can also cause HCAI. In other words, no matter how good our control measures, not all HCAI can be prevented. However, we are not complacent, and this Trust gives a high priority to infection control.

This can be seen by our performance in the Department of Health measures of hospital infection control and cleanliness, which has been consistently excellent.

We hope this leaflet will give you helpful information about what we, and you, can do to help prevent HCAI.

Up-to-date information on Healthcare Associated Infections in the Women's Hospital is displayed at the hospital entrance.

J Gray
Infection Control
Doctor

J Suviste
Infection Control
Nurse

J Owen
Director of
Infection Prevention
& Control

Steven Peak
Chief Executive

Hand Hygiene

All our staff get regular training on cleaning their hands. We expect staff to clean their hands each time they have contact with a patient. Hand wash basins and alcohol hand rub are available in all areas where patients are treated. Don't assume that staff haven't cleaned their hands because you didn't see them doing it. They may well have cleaned their hands when they were out of your sight. However, if you are concerned, it is OK for you to politely ask our staff if they have cleaned their hands.

The hands of patients and visitors can also spread infections. If you are well enough, we encourage you to clean your hands regularly while you are in hospital. We also encourage visitors to clean their hands both when they arrive on and leave the ward.

Hospital cleanliness

We are proud of the standard of cleaning in our Hospital, and often receive good feedback from patients. We are fortunate in having excellent cleaning staff who are employed by the Trust, and not by an outside company. Cleaning standards are checked regularly. Also cleaning schedules for wards and departments are on public display, allowing you to see how each area should be cleaned. However, if you have any concerns about cleaning, please discuss this with nursing or midwifery staff. You and your visitors can help us keep the hospital clean too by disposing of litter carefully. Try also to keep your possessions tidy, so that it is easier for staff to clean around them.

Isolation

If we know or think that you have an infection that can easily spread in hospital we may have to isolate you in a single room. If we need to do this, we will explain to you why it is necessary. We will also try hard to minimise the inconvenience to you and your visitors.

MRSA

A lot of what you may have read or heard about MRSA greatly exaggerates the risks. In particular, infections with MRSA can be treated, and they are no more dangerous than many other infections.

MRSA is very uncommon in Birmingham Women's Hospital. Most of the small number of cases that we do see are in patients who had the infection before they were admitted to our hospital. Up-to-date information on MRSA in the Women's Hospital is displayed at the hospital entrance. Information on MRSA in all English hospitals is available on the Department of Health website (www.dh.gov.uk).

MRSA Screening

People with MRSA often have no symptoms and do not know that they have it.

For this reason we now test many of our admissions to see whether they have MRSA. This involves taking a swab from your nose, which is sent to the laboratory for testing. Collecting the swab takes only a few seconds and should not be uncomfortable