Treating Infections

• Antibiotics can be used to treat most infections caused by bacteria. In some cases the usual treatment may not work because the bacteria are “resistant” to it. In this case, other antibiotics may be used.

• Antibiotics may be given as tablets, syrup, through an injection, drip or into the lungs (through a nebuliser).

• Please see UCLH patient information leaflet entitled ‘Antibiotics’ for further information on how antibiotics work and side effects.

Staff training

• All staff have annual training on infection control from when they first arrive in the Trust. In some areas (such as the Intensive Care Unit) there is even more training. We constantly monitor infection control standards throughout the Hospital.

Contact details

Direct tel: 020 3447 9716
Switchboard: 08451 555 000
Extension: 79716
Address: Infection Control Department 3rd Floor East 250 Euston Road, London, NW1 2PG
Website: www.uclh.nhs.uk

Where can I get more information?

Department of Health
Website: www.gov.uk/dh

Public Health England
Website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england

UCLH cannot accept responsibility for information provided by external organisations.

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this document, please contact us on 020 3447 9716. We will try our best to meet your needs.
Introduction
This leaflet explains what the infection control team are doing to control hospital infections at UCLH (University College London Hospitals) and what you and your visitors can do to help us.

What we are doing at UCLH.
- We want to make the hospital as clean and safe as possible for everyone by:
  - Screening (testing) patients who come into hospital to see if they already have any infections.
  - Preventing the spread of infection to other patients while in our care.
  - Controlling any infection present.
  - Treating infection appropriately and
  - Training our staff regularly.

Prevention and Control
- We are making sure our wards are cleaner and tidier. Cleaners work constantly to make sure that surfaces, equipment and bathrooms are kept clean and these are checked regularly.
- To reduce the spread of infection we are making sure that all staff clean their hands before and after touching every patient including the patient's environment. This can be done with alcohol gel or soap and water. We also encourage patients and visitors to wash their hands.
- Every hand wash basin in the Trust has soap provided for patients, staff and visitors to clean their hands. Alcohol gel is widely available in key areas throughout the Trust.
- Patients with certain infections are cared for in a single room whenever possible. Disposable gloves, aprons and masks may be used by the staff for extra protection to prevent certain infections being spread.

Screening
- We screen all patients for certain infections e.g. MRSA on admission or before they come into hospital; including those being admitted for surgery, those who are transferred from another hospital or nursing home and those who have had a previous infection.
- Screening is usually done by wiping the nose, skin or wound with a cotton wool bud, or by taking a sample of diarrhoea. This is sent to a laboratory for testing.
- Special care is taken when moving a patient with an infection to another ward, hospital or clinic.
- We watch out for any outbreak of infection and identify the cause to stop it spreading.

What can you do?
Patients
- You should wash your hair and take a bath or shower as usual at home before coming into hospital and wash regularly when in hospital. Nursing staff will assist you if required.
- Please ask us whether equipment has been cleaned between uses, such as the blood pressure machine.
- Always wash your hands after going to the toilet and before eating. There are also hand wipes available.
- Make sure you take the whole course of any antibiotic medicine.
- If you have a drip, drain or catheter that becomes sore, please ask your nurse to check to see if it needs changing.
- If you have not seen our staff clean their hands with either alcohol gel or soap and water, before they touch you please just say “Have you cleaned your hands?”

Visitors
- Make sure that you wash your hands on the ward or use the alcohol gel before and after visiting a patient in hospital.
- No more than two visitors at any time around the bed.
- Any children visiting must be supervised at all times so that they do not touch equipment or dressings.
- Please check with the nurse in charge before visiting a patient if you have a medical condition which makes you vulnerable to infection, or a mild infection such as a cold, diarrhoea or vomiting, or if you feel unwell.
- Please do not sit on the bed
- Inform ward or department staff if you notice any alcohol gel or soap dispensers that are empty.
- Tell us if you notice anywhere that has not been cleaned properly – such as the ward, bathrooms or toilets.