

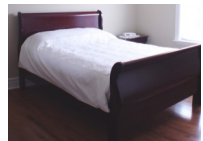
Tips for Preventing Infection Following Surgery

Most patients who have surgery do not develop infection. However, the risk of infection in patients having surgery is about one to three of every 100 patients. Doctors, nurses, and other healthcare providers who take care of you do many things to prevent these infections, but there also are actions that *patients and family members* can take to help lower the risk of infection.

If you do not see a caregiver clean his/her hands before he or she cares for you, please ASK him/her to do so.

AFTER YOUR SURGERY:

- *Avoid touching your incision area* and follow all instructions from your doctor about how to take care of your incision.
- *Before and after* taking care of your incision area, *wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer* and have any family member helping with your care do the same.
- If you have any *signs/symptoms of an infection* such as redness, pain, fever, or drainage, *call your doctor immediately*.
- Until the incision is completely healed, *always use a different wash cloth for the incision area* than the one used for the rest of your body.
- *Keep clean sheets on your bed* and make sure the clothes that come in contact with your incision area are clean.
- *Keep pets away from the incision* until healed.



BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

- Make sure you *understand how to take care of your wound*.
- *Ask questions* when you are unsure.
- *Know who to contact* if you have questions or problems after you get home.
- *Keep all appointments scheduled* at the time of discharge.

