Verde Valley Medical Center
Northern Arizona Healthcare

INFECTION PREVENTION NEWSLETTER - October 2013

The Infection Prevention Office has moved to the Quality Office. Office phone is 639-6261 (x36261).

INTRODUCING>>>> Dr. Keckich

David Keckich, M.D., is a specialist with Verde Valley Medical Clinic – Infectious Diseases. Dr. Keckich joined the Clinic in 2013. His previous training and experience included programs in Baltimore, Md., and Phoenix, Ariz.

As a specialist in infectious diseases, Dr. Keckich is trained in the diagnosis and treatment of infectious diseases of all kinds, including bacterial, fungal, and viral infections. He has expertise in the treatment of severe and resistant bacterial infections, such as MRSA, VRE, and Clostridium difficile (C.diff); chronic osteomyelitis; device infections; viral infections such as Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV; and infections in patients with weakened immune systems. He has special interest in HIV.

Dr. Keckich earned his medical degree from the University of Maryland in Baltimore. He completed his internal medicine residency at Mayo Clinic Arizona in Phoenix, where he was chief medical resident and an attending hospital internal medicine physician. He completed his fellowship in infectious diseases at the University of Maryland. He is board certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine.

Dr. Keckich says...Get Your Flu Vaccine!

Coughs and colds are an inconvenience, but the influenza virus is different. Influenza is a real killer: tens of thousands of Americans die from influenza in a typical year. Influenza causes a severe illness that can last for a week or more, and can cause pneumonia and trigger heart attacks. Those at highest risk are people under age 5, over age 65, and those with lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, kidney disease, and cancer. This describes most of our patients, and we have a responsibility to make our hospital and clinics as safe as possible.

Influenza is spread by respiratory droplets at distance ***up to 6 feet***, and can easily be passed even without touching someone sick. Unfortunately, people are contagious even before symptoms begin, so staying home, or avoiding people with a cough, is not enough. The vaccine is proven safe and effective, and cannot "cause the flu." The flu season can start as early as October, so don't wait until the last minute: the sooner we are vaccinated, the sooner our patients are protected. And remember, ***getting your vaccine could save someone's life.***

Arizona Dept of Health Epidemiology Update on Flu:

The Arizona Department of Health Services and the Maricopa County Department of Public Health have confirmed the first influenza case in Arizona for the 2013-2014 influenza season. The patient is a child infected with influenza B as confirmed by PCR at the Arizona State Public Health Laboratory. He had no recent travel out-of-state and was not

hospitalized. There is ample vaccine supply for the season and all individuals aged 6 months or older should be vaccinated as recommended. This year's national influenza vaccine recommendations are available at http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/vaccine/index.htm or http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/ACIP-list.htm.

In the 2012-2013 Influenza season (last year) there were 11,296 laboratory confirmed cases from all 15 counties across AZ; 71% was identified as Influenza A, 26% as Influenza B and 3% as an Unknown type.

Summer surveillance (4/29-9/28/13): 78 laboratory confirmed cases of influenza from 8 counties across AZ were identified. Flu did not take a summer break this year!

REMINDER…

NAH has determined that the Influenza vaccine is required for all employees beginning the 2013-2014 flu season (this year). Influenza vaccine is available in the Employee Health Office (call Patty at x36397) or in the Infection Prevention Office (call Karen at x36261). This year VVMC is administering the trivalent vaccine through intramuscular (IM) injection. If you receive your flu vaccine outside of NAH, please remember to submit a copy of your flu shot record to Employee Health. Employees who are non-compliant with flu vaccination and have not received a medical or religious exemption by Dec 1, 2013 will not be able to at work at any VVMC/FMC/NAH facility beginning Dec 2, 2013.

Did you know…

- After using the bathroom, a single hand can have a population count of more than 200 million bacteria per square inch.
- A kitchen cutting board harbors 50 times more bacteria than your toilet seat.
- The average desk harbors 400 times more bacteria than your toilet seat.
- Viruses can survive on common surfaces like faucet handles for up to 72 hours.
- The majority of food poisoning cases are acquired in the home.
- The average child catches at least 8 colds a year, and U.S. kids miss as many as 189 million school days each year due to colds.

HAND HYGIENE

I am sure you have all seen the **"WASH IN – WASH OUT"** posters around the facility. Verde Valley Medical Center has an active, ongoing Hand Hygiene program and campaign. Why? There are many reasons – the most important: it is for **YOUR safety** and the **safety of our patients**. Let's explore just why hand hygiene is so important.

Hands are the main pathways for germ transmission during health care. In 2002, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimated that the number of healthcare acquired infections in U.S. hospitals, including federal facilities, was approximately **1.7 million**!

These infections included:

- 33,269 among newborns in high-risk nurseries,
- 19,059 among newborns in well-baby nurseries,
- 417,946 among adults and children in ICUs,
- 1,266,851 among adults and children outside of ICUs.

The estimated deaths associated with healthcare acquired infections totaled 98,987.

Patient deaths were attributed from:
35,967 for pneumonia
30,665 for bloodstream infections
13,088 for urinary tract infections
8,205 for surgical site infections
11,062 for infections of other sites

Explain the terms used with Hand Hygiene:

Alcohol-based hand rub: An alcohol-containing product designed to be applied to the hands for the purpose of reducing the number of microorganisms on the hands. (The active ingredient in the Purell used at VVMC is 65% ethanol)

Decontaminate hands: Actions performed to reduce bacterial counts on hands

Hand hygiene: A general term that applies to either hand washing or the use of waterless hand rub products

Handwashing: The act of cleansing hands with plain (i.e., non-antimicrobial) soap and water

Plain soap: refers to detergents that do not contain antimicrobial agents or contain low concentrations of antimicrobial agents that are effective solely as preservatives.

Surgical hand antisepsis: Antiseptic hand wash or antiseptic hand rub is performed preoperatively by surgical personnel to eliminate transient flora and to reduce resident hand flora. Antiseptic detergent preparations often have persistent antimicrobial activity.

Visibly soiled hands: Are hands that show visible dirt or are visibly contaminated with proteinaceous material, blood, or other body fluids (e.g., fecal material or urine).

Waterless antiseptic agent: An antiseptic agent that does not require use of water.

Hand washing is the single most important thing we can do to keep from getting sick and spreading illness to others.

REMEMBER.....Washing hands saves lives!

Sneezing and sniffling? Do your co-workers a favor and stay home

You knew it was only a matter of time. You wake up one morning with a pounding headache and a throat that feels like sandpaper. You force your aching limbs out of bed and take your temperature. As the mercury rises to 100 degrees, you wonder whether or not you should go to work. You have a big meeting that day, so you decide you have to go. Plus, you rationalize that you can always leave after the meeting if you're still feeling ill.

As you sniffle your way to work, you mumble to yourself that it was surely your coworker who got you sick, because he/she had been sneezing nonstop for the past week. Yet as you settle into your work area coughing uncontrollably, you become the next culprit to spread the sickness to your co-workers. At least you can take comfort that you're not alone. A recent survey found that 76% of workers came to work sick at least somewhat frequently.

GET YOUR FLU SHOT

There are a variety of reasons why workers come to work sick. Perhaps they have a big project they don't want to get behind on, or they've used up all their personal days. But if the reason is to impress co-workers with their dedication, it's not working. When a worker comes in under the weather, even with good intentions, he/she ends up doing more harm than good.

Lead by example --- ***Managers*** *are looked up to as leaders, so if you manage a team and you come into work sick, you're setting a precedent and encouraging others to follow your lead. If workers show signs of the flu, tell them to head home; don't wait for them to ask permission to leave.*

Staying home when you are sick shows that you're putting the health of your co workers and patients first.

RESPIRATORY HYGIENE AND COUGH ETIQUETTE:

This is the time of year that we want to remind all coworkers, patients and visitors to perform respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.

What is respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette? These are measures we put into place that help to minimize the transmission of respiratory infections from respiratory droplets.

What does this mean? We need to encourage our coworkers, patients and visitors to:

- Cover their mouths and noses when coughing or sneezing (Cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder if you do not have a tissue)
- Perform hand hygiene after coughing or sneezing into the hands or after using a tissue
- Advise the use of a mask for those employees, patients and visitors who are coughing.

Around the facility you will see clear plastic Respiratory Hygiene stations that have signage in English and Spanish identifying the steps in Respiratory Hygiene. These stations are filled with tissues, masks and alcohol hand rubs. Located under the station is a trash can to allow for disposal of used supplies.

Please encourage everyone to participate in Respiratory Hygiene and Cough Etiquette so we can keep our facility healthy!

GET YOUR FLU SHOT