

## Top Tips to Prevent Infection

If you are visiting a member of the family or a friend either in **hospital** or another place of care such as a **care home**, there are a number of things you can do to help prevent the spread of any infection, including winter vomiting disease (norovirus) and MRSA.

Some infections such as norovirus may be brought in from the community and can spread rapidly between patients and staff. Remember - **hospitals, healthcare facilities** and **care homes** have many vulnerable patients and residents - your actions can affect their health.

### Be careful when bringing in fresh food or gifts

Check what kind of gifts or food it is OK to bring in. Some wards, for example ICU, won't allow flowers and some may prefer you not to bring in food. During outbreaks of norovirus you are best advised not to bring in food from home.

Please limit the amount of items brought into hospital as they can cause clutter and make cleaning of the ward difficult.

### Make sure your hands are clean

Making sure your hands are clean is one of the most important ways to stop infections spreading. Wash your hands regularly with soap and water, especially after going to the toilet. Use the hand hygiene facilities at the hospital or care home (hand washing or alcohol hand rub) before entering the ward / resident's room and after visiting. Look for the notices at the entrance to wards / care homes advising you what to do.

### Watch what you are touching and where you are sitting

Don't touch dressings, wounds, drips, catheters or any other equipment round the bed.

Use the visitors' toilets, not the patients' toilets.

Please use the chairs provided for visitors.

Please keep to the visiting times and to the number of visitors allowed. If there are norovirus outbreaks in hospitals there may be additional visitor restrictions. Please follow all advice regarding visiting at this time.

### Don't visit if you are feeling unwell

Don't visit a patient in hospital or resident in a care home if you are feeling unwell or have an infection such as flu or a heavy cold, or if you or a member of your household are suffering from diarrhoea or vomiting. If you aren't well enough to visit then you are welcome to phone the ward or care home and leave a message.

If you have vomiting or diarrhoea you should not visit a patient/resident in a hospital or care home until 48 hours after your symptoms have stopped.

### Speak to the team on the ward if you have any concerns