

News Release

For Immediate Release

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WRMC Maintains Constant Effort to Prevent Infections

Batesville, Ark – Preventing infections is essential to providing safe, high quality care to our patients and to enhancing public trust and confidence in hospitals. White River Medical Center works aggressively to fight infection through education, prevention and treatment programs involving all hospital employees.

Patients frequently have multiple chronic illnesses that can affect the ability of their immune systems to fight infection and require intensive therapy. At the same time some strains of bacteria have developed resistance to many commonly used antibiotics making the infection difficult to treat. Therefore, hospital infection control departments must continually monitor infection control protocols and adapt to a constantly changing environment.

Infection control involves employees at all levels in the hospital. Employees are required each year to review infection control procedures and are tested on their knowledge. Hand washing is still the number one method of preventing infection transmission. Hand washing stations are located in hallways giving caregivers ample opportunity to practice stringent hand hygiene. Additionally, alcohol based hand sanitizer is available in wall mounted dispensers in patient rooms and all patient care areas.

Working with each patient's primary care physician, the Infection Control Department at WRMC works to identify patients who are at risk, as well as those with communicable infections. Surgical patients are given antibiotics to prevent infections prior to surgery and monitored closely after surgery for any sign of a developing infection so that the condition can be addressed quickly. When an infection has been identified, precautions are taken by everyone involved in the patient's care to prevent transmission of the infection to others. Precautions may include: a private room with special ventilation, and gowns, gloves and masks worn by caregivers depending on the type of bacteria. The precautions used to prevent the transmission of infection may be used with patients whose immune system has been compromised by illness to protect them from possible infection.

Hospitals will never be able to completely eliminate infections because it is our job to care for patients who need treatment for illnesses caused by these germs. The efforts by physicians, infection control staff, the nursing staff and other clinical departments have led to a unified effort with measurable results for the prevention, identification and treatment of infections at WRMC.