

Sharing your information

Your information will only be disclosed to those who have a genuine need to know and who agree to keep your information confidential. For your direct care we often share information with:

- NHS hospitals and clinics
- GPs
- Social care

Following the principles within the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), MCH processes your data for purposes of:

- provision of health or social care or treatment
- medical diagnosis
- preventative or occupational medicine
- management of health or social care systems and services, carried out by, or under the supervision of health professional or another person, who in the circumstances owes a duty of confidentiality under an enactment or rule of law

Who to contact

Tissue viability

t: 01634 382767

Unit 7/8 Ambley Green, Bailey Drive, Gillingham, Kent ME8 0NJ

Our privacy notice is available at medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/privacy/

If you would like to view or request a copy of your patient record, please email medch.dataprotection@nhs.net or call 01634 334640. In most instances this service is free and we aim to provide the requested information within 1 calendar month. More information can be found by visiting:

medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/contact-us/information-about-me/

Medway Community Healthcare provides a wide range of high quality community health services for Medway residents; from community nurses and health visitors to speech and language therapists and out of hours urgent care.

Customer care

Please send any comments about Medway Community Healthcare services to: -

Customer care coordinator
Medway Community Healthcare
MCH House, Bailey Drive, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 0PZ
t: 01634 334650
medwaycustomer@nhs.net

All contact will be treated confidentially
This information can be made available in other formats and languages. Please email medch.communications@nhs.net

Ref: MCH 359.1



Recognising infection

Information for patients and carers



Medway Community Healthcare CIC providing services on behalf of the NHS
Registered office: MCH House, Bailey Drive, Gillingham, Kent ME8 0PZ
Tel: 01634 337593
Registered in England and Wales, Company number: 07275637



What is an infection?

An infection is a disease caused by the colonisation (invasion) of the body by pathogenic organisms such as viruses or bacteria (germs). (Collins dictionary)

There are billions of bacteria on/in the human body which are needed to keep us healthy and do not harm us (the host), such as the bacterial flora in the intestine and on the skin

We all develop infections at times, but mostly our body is able to fight them off rapidly. It is only considered an infection if the colonization harms the host in a way that affects their health.

Remember good hand hygiene can prevent infection.

Common infections and their signs and symptoms

On skin or in a wound:

- Redness
- Heat
- Swelling
- Discharge
- Odour
- Pain or feeling generally unwell

In the bladder:

- Passing urine frequently
- Blood in the urine
- Lower abdominal or back pain
- Feeling generally unwell

In the throat or chest:

- Sore throat or chest
- Cough
- Coughing up phlegm
- Feeling generally unwell

Infections may also occur in any other parts of the body

If any of these signs occur, contact your GP, nurse or health care professional caring for you.

They will decide on the severity of your infection and treat accordingly.

Severity of infection

Mild infection

The body's immune system can clear most infections (ear/throat/chest/skin infections)

More serious infection

If your infection does not improve or gets worse, you may need oral antibiotics.

Systemic severe infection also known as SSI

This is when the infection has invaded the body and you begin to feel quite ill.

This includes infections such as Pneumonia, Urine infection, Meningitis, Cellulitis/septic arthritis/infected wound.

These could require either oral or intravenous antibiotics (by injection).

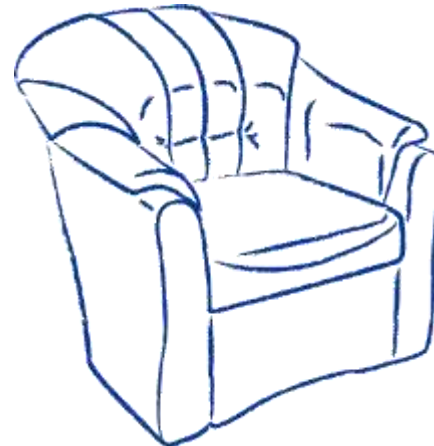
High risk infections

Some people are at higher risk of an infection:

- People with a disease causing a reduced immune response or having chemotherapy
- Diabetics
- Recent surgery /invasive procedure
- Indwelling medical device (e.g. catheter or medication line)
- A history of fever or rigors (shaking)
- A history of MRSA

If you or the person you are caring for are at high risk of infection see the GP promptly if you suspect they may have an infection.

If you suspect the infection is severe, call their GP or Dial 111 for an urgent appointment.



Sepsis

Infections in people with a higher risk, who are not promptly treated, could develop Sepsis.

Sepsis is an extremely rare but potentially life-threatening condition triggered by an infection. In Sepsis, the body's immune system goes into overdrive, causing total body inflammation that can affect the vital organs (brain, heart, kidneys).

Trigger signs of suspecting a Sepsis

- Feeling very hot or very cold
- Temperature below 35.5C or above 38.3C
- Rapid respiration (breathing)
- Pulse/heart rate above 90 per minute
- Acute confusion or drowsiness

If you suspect the infection could be Sepsis Dial 999

Prompt action could increase the chance of survival

Adapted from UK Sepsis Trust
www.servivesepsis.org
and Patients UK
www.patient.co.uk