

## Hospital-Associated Infections

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As a healthcare professional, you know that hospital-associated infections (HAIs) represent a global crisis that has reached devastating proportions. At Kimberly-Clark, we share your concerns about HAIs and are just as passionate as you are about prevention. That is why we have prepared this brochure to support you in your daily fight against preventable HAIs such as surgical site infections (SSIs).



# SSI?

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**NOT ON MY WATCH.**

<sup>1</sup> Cook, R. "Hospitals learn simple, cheap steps can prevent infections," San Francisco Chronicle, July 18, 2004; F1.  
<sup>2</sup> [http://www.safecarecampaign.org/guide/ssi/ssi\\_01.html](http://www.safecarecampaign.org/guide/ssi/ssi_01.html)



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### Surgical Site Infections (SSIs)

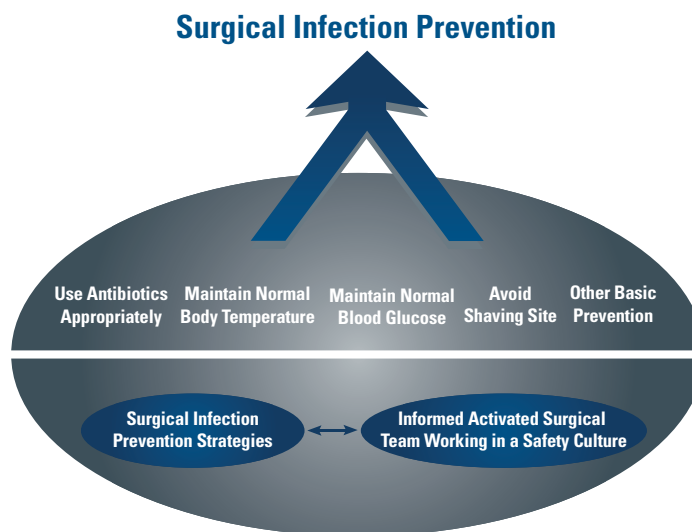
Surgical site infections (SSIs) are the second most common type of adverse events occurring in hospitalized patients and result in up to \$10 billion in treatment costs every year in the U.S. alone.

- 780,000 out of 30 million surgical procedures performed annually in the U.S. result in SSIs<sup>1</sup>
- 38% of all nosocomial infections in surgical patients are SSIs<sup>2</sup>
- 4 to 16% of all nosocomial infections are SSIs<sup>2</sup>
- 2 to 5% of operated patients will develop SSI<sup>2</sup>
- SSI increases the patient's length of stay in the hospital by an average of 7.5 days<sup>2</sup>

The following information was adapted from the Institute's website. [www.ihl.org](http://www.ihl.org)

### Preventing Surgical Site Infections (SSIs)

According to the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, effective surgical infection prevention requires redesigning systems to reduce risk factors and to optimize evidence-based processes of care.



- Avoid shaving the operative site
  - This preventive measure provides opportunities for improvement in most hospitals.
- Use basic prevention strategies from Category IA Center for Disease Control Recommendations
- Maintain postoperative glucose control for major cardiac surgery patients
  - Review of medical literature shows that the degree of hyperglycemia in the postoperative period was correlated with the rate of surgical site infection in patients undergoing major cardiac surgery.
- Maintain postoperative normothermia for colorectal surgery patients
  - The medical literature indicates that patients undergoing colorectal surgery have a decreased risk of surgical site infection if they are not allowed to become hypothermic during the perioperative period.
- Use prophylactic antibiotics appropriately
  - An estimated 40-60 percent of SSIs are preventable with appropriate use of prophylactic antibiotics.

### Additional Resources

For more information about preventing hospital-associated infections, including further evidence-based guidelines, please access the following resources:

[www.aacn.org](http://www.aacn.org)  
[www.aom.org](http://www.aom.org)  
[www.apic.org](http://www.apic.org)

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)  
[www.haiwatch.com](http://www.haiwatch.com)  
[www.ihl.org](http://www.ihl.org)