4.1: Aseptic Technique Introduction

Learning Objectives

- Perform appropriate hand hygiene
- Use standard precautions
- Use category-specific, transmission-based precautions
- Maintain a sterile field and equipment
- Apply and safely remove sterile gloves and personal protective equipment
- Dispose of contaminated wastes appropriately

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), over 2 million patients in America contract a healthcare-associated infection, and 99,000 patients die from a healthcare-associated infection every year.[1] Healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) are unintended and often preventable infections caused by care received in a health care setting. Healthcare-associated infections can be prevented by consistently following standard precautions and transmission-based precautions outlined by the CDC (2020). Standard precautions are used when caring for all patients and include performing appropriate hand hygiene; wearing personal protective equipment when indicated; implementing category-specific transmission precautions; encouraging respiratory hygiene; and following environmental infection control measures, including handling of sharps, laundry, and hazardous waste. Additional infection control measures include the appropriate use of aseptic technique and sterile technique when performing nursing procedures to protect the patient from transmission of microorganisms.[2] Each of these strategies to keep patients and health care workers free of infection is discussed in further detail in this chapter.


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