1.1: Introduction

In health care, the use of effective and safe infection prevention and control practices is everyone’s responsibility. Infection prevention and control guidelines are mandated in hospitals to protect patients, health care personnel, and families from the transmission of organisms that cause infections. This chapter will review the principles of infection prevention and control practices, and the use of additional precautions and personal protective equipment to control and prevent the spread of infection in acute health care settings. The chapter also will explore surgical asepsis, the principles of sterile technique, and procedures related to sterile technique in the operating room and during invasive procedures.

Learning Objectives

- Define infection prevention and control practices, and list the principles and practices of infection control and prevention
- Explain how to perform hand hygiene using soap and water and alcohol-based hand rubs
- Describe how and when to use additional precautions and personal protective equipment
- Explain the difference between the three types of additional precautions: contact, airborne, and droplet
- Define blood or body fluid exposure and the steps to take if exposed
- Describe when surgical asepsis and sterile technique are used
- Explain the principles of sterile technique
- Describe how to perform various procedures such as surgical hand scrub, applying sterile gloves, and preparing a sterile field