

AUGUST 2015

Using zone defense for clean hands

In many team sports, zone defense—each player protecting a certain zone—can be the best way to win the game. For preventing infection at St. Jude, the best defense is to create a clean zone around each patient. Keeping all the hands around your child clean is always the best and easiest way to stop the spread of germs. That means washing hands with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand gel or foam.

Many St. Jude patients cannot fight off infection well because of their diseases and treatments. A simple viral

infection like a cold or the flu could lead to serious illness or death.

Germs that are passed to patients in the hospital most often come from the hands of staff, parents and family members. For this reason, the Nursing Surgical Services staff is introducing a new hand hygiene program to improve how well and how often staff and patient family members clean their hands.

They will use the World Health Organization's "Your 5 Moments for Hand Hygiene" poster as a guideline and reminder for St. Jude staff

members. The poster shows that hand washing is always required before entering and after exiting a patient zone. A patient zone is any open area in the health care setting that is divided by some kind of lines, such as walls, curtains or lines on the floor. For staff, the other five moments of hand hygiene include: 1) before touching a patient, 2) before a clean/aseptic procedure, 3) after body fluid exposure, 4) after touching a patient, and 5) after touching patient surroundings.

St. Jude strives to provide family-centered care, and that makes parents and other caregivers an important part of the "zone defense" to prevent infection. The staff has created hand hygiene flyers just for patient families. They are called "5 Moments for Clean Hands." Even for family members,

it is always important to clean your hands before entering and after leaving a patient zone (room). Your other five moments for clean hands include: 1) Before direct contact

with your child, 2) before and after eating, 3) after touching body fluids, such as blood or urine, 4) before and after feeding your child, and 5) after using the restroom, coughing or sneezing. For more details, see the handout called "Do You Know... Clean Hands."

Please help the staff provide safer care for all St. Jude patients by defending the clean zone around your child and other patients. Wash your hands often and encourage others to do the same.

New anesthesia prescreening process could decrease delays and frustration

Imagine your child is scheduled for his four-month checkup that includes an MRI under general anesthesia. Your child had braces placed on his teeth last week. You arrive at St. Jude at 7 a.m., and your child has been NPO (without food and water) since 10 p.m. last night. You first go to Assessment & Triage and then to your child's primary clinic. When you finally get to MRI, you find out that the braces will have to come off before the MRI scan. Are you kidding me?! If you had only known, you could have planned for all of this in advance and saved your child unnecessary discomfort. Frustrating!

The Nursing Surgical Services staff has created a new prescreening process to help decrease these kinds of surprises, cancellations and delays, which are frustrating for everyone involved. By making their process more efficient they hope to provide even greater quality of care. When your child needs general anesthesia for surgery, diagnostic imaging, radiation therapy, or procedures, a specialty nurse will carefully screen your child's medical record before the scheduled anesthesia date. The nurse will look for any issues that might need attention, such as specific tests, changes to your child's schedule, or medication concerns. The specialty nurse will also call you on the phone

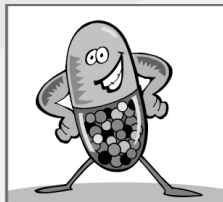
to see you if you have any concerns that need attention before anesthesia is given.

We realize that appointments for many tests are scheduled weeks in advance, so many things can change before that appointment day arrives. For example, your child may have recently been in your local hospital with fever and congestion. In that case, the nurse would talk with your primary clinic and the anesthesiologist to make sure it is the best time to proceed with the test or procedure. We always want to make sure we provide the safest care for your child.

Parents: This prescreening process is a chance for you to share your concerns with the anesthesia doctors and nurses. You might be worried about your child's past experiences with IVs, "waking up," problems with anesthesia or other issues. The nurse can also give you guidelines about when to arrive, what your child's actual NPO times are, which medicines your child should take and not take, and what to expect the day your child receives anesthesia.

If you have questions about this new prescreening process, have your primary clinic contact the pre-anesthesia screening nurse. Nursing Surgical Services wants to create the best possible anesthesia experience for your child.





Talking about Medicines

At St. Jude, we take medicines personally

By Roseann Gammal, PharmD, Pharmaceutical Services

Why do certain medicines work for some people and not for others? Why do some people get side effects from a medicine and other people don't? The answers to these questions may be in our DNA.

DNA is like a set of instructions for your body. Each person has a slightly different version of DNA; that's why we are all different. Certain parts of our DNA, called genes, are responsible for how we respond to medicines—whether they work for us and whether we get side effects from them. "Pharmacogenetics" (FAR mah coh je NEH tiks) is the word used to describe how our DNA (our genetics) affects medicines.

Researchers at St. Jude are finding out which genes affect which medicines. Pharmacists at St. Jude are figuring out how to use these kinds of research discoveries to select and dose medicines based on your child's unique DNA. They are also looking for the best way to put your child's genetic information in the medical record so it is easy for doctors and other clinic staff to find. Knowing what certain parts of your child's DNA look like from a blood test helps doctors pick the medicines that will work best for your child and ones that will have the fewest side effects. This is one of many ways that the staff personalizes care for St. Jude patients.

The staff tries to talk to every eligible St. Jude patient and patient family about being a part of the PG4KDS (Pharmacogenetics for Kids) program. All enrolled patients have the option of receiving their DNA test results by mail. These letters explain what the DNA test results mean and how they might affect certain medicines. Please keep these letters and show them to your child's doctors or pharmacists outside of St. Jude so that others can personalize medicine for your child, too. These letters are also offered online through the *My St. Jude* patient portal (www.stjude.org/mystjude).

For more information, please visit the PG4KDS website at www.stjude.org/pg4kds. You may also call the research nurses at 901-595-2482. If you are calling from outside the Memphis area, dial toll-free 1-866-2ST-JUDE (1-866-278-5833), then extension 2482.

Have you registered for the online patient portal, called *My St. Jude*? Visit www.stjude.org/mystjude for details.

St. Jude Parents is published on the first of each month by Family-Centered Care Services and Biomedical Communications. Your questions and comments are important to us. **We want to print advice and tips from St. Jude parents to other St. Jude parents.**

To share your ideas or to receive this newsletter by email, please call or email Alicia Huettel, RN, MSN, at 901-595-5453 (parents_newsletter@stjude.org) or Lois Young (lois.young@stjude.org). To subscribe to an online version of this newsletter or to learn more about *St. Jude Parents*, visit www.stjude.org/parents-newsletter.

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Don't miss Neon Night of Fun for patients and siblings ages 10–14

Patients, siblings and guests ages 10–14 will enjoy a Neon Night of Fun Thursday, August 13, from 5–7 p.m. in the Kay Kafe Rotunda. Each patient can bring one guest between the ages of 10 and 14. Siblings in that age range are also invited, but siblings may not bring guests for this event.

Activities will include a neon dance with an awesome DJ, neon face painting, and neon games such as ping pong. The famous chefs of St. Jude will cater the event with fun food that is sure to make your child glow. Since this event is for pre-teens only, we will have something special for parents to do as well.

Pre-registration is required for guests. A legal guardian of each guest must sign a consent form that can be turned in on the night of event. To get consent forms, please call Shawn Brasher of Child Life at 901-595-4665.



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