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Reduce the Risk  
of a Post  
Surgical Infection**



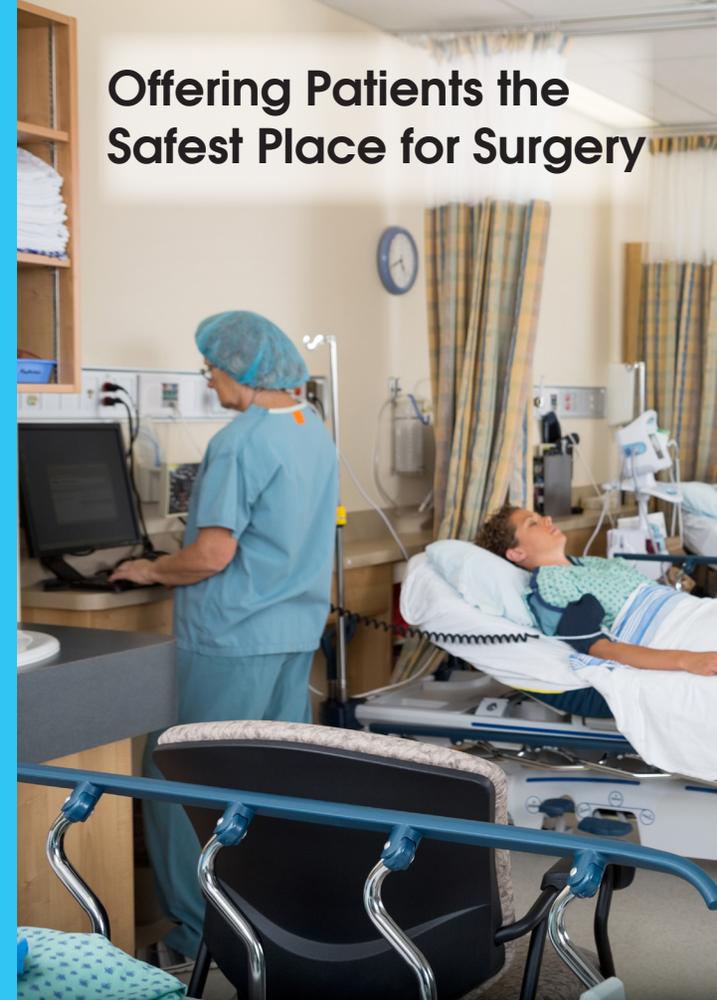
**Please read and use these  
lifesaving 10 Steps.  
For more information, visit  
[www.hospitalinfection.org](http://www.hospitalinfection.org)**

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**Offering Patients the  
Safest Place for Surgery**



**10 STEPS**

**to Minimize Infection Risk at  
Ambulatory Surgery Centers**



# RID'S INFECTION PREVENTION PLAN FOR AMBULATORY SURGICAL CENTERS

For patients undergoing many types of elective surgery, using an ambulatory surgical center reduces infection risk. The recommendations below will improve that advantage even more. ASCs that follow these recommended steps will enhance the benefits of outpatient surgery, making it an even smarter choice for patients and their surgeons.

**1. Designate a professional at the ASC to take responsibility for monitoring infection prevention, and overseeing an education plan for all staff.** Infection prevention is everyone's job. But making a full time staff member accountable ensures the job gets done.

**2. Rigorous cleaning and disinfection of equipment and surfaces are key.** Caregivers' hands and gloves become recontaminated seconds after they are cleaned if they come in contact with a contaminated bedrail, drawer pull, or other object.

**3. ASC staff should wear only scrubs laundered by the facility's healthcare-accredited laundry.** Home laundering is insufficient to reduce microbes to a safe level. Physicians, nurses and other staff with patient contact should remove scrubs before leaving the ASC, and put on a fresh set of scrubs after returning to work.

**4. Colonoscopies and other endoscopic procedures are commonly done in ambulatory settings.** Staff who clean and disinfect scopes must adhere to rigorous hygienic protocols and use reprocessing machines according to instructions, not cutting corners to save time.

**5. Personnel with direct patient contact should not wear jewelry, artificial finger nails or nail extenders.**

**6. Use disposable paper privacy curtains or antimicrobial curtains.** Bacteria and other pathogens can linger for days or weeks on standard, untreated privacy curtains, contaminating the hands of every caregiver who pulls the curtain open or closed.



**7. Thorough cleaning of mattresses is essential, because mattress contamination is a major cause of infection.** Mattresses should be inspected for tears, and covers should be removed frequently, so the mattress interior can be inspected for remnants of bodily fluids.

**8. Use wireless ECG technology.** ECG wires are difficult to disinfect, and often come in direct contact with incisions and other bodily openings.

**9. If hair has to be removed from the surgical site, use clippers, not a razor.** Razors can create small nicks in the skin, inviting bacteria to invade the patient.

**10. Confer with surgeons using your facility about key clinical issues in SSI prevention.** These include screening patients for Staph colonization, and using intranasal mupirocin or povidone iodine and chlorhexidine bathing to decolonize them. Also discuss techniques to avoid hypothermia, as well as the importance of a prophylactic antibiotic an hour before the first incision.