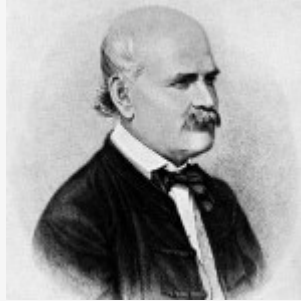


# Ignaz Semmelweis Award



Dr. Ignaz Semmelweis

In the mid-nineteenth century, when women were dying in childbirth in the obstetrics clinic in Vienna, physician Ignaz Semmelweis figured out what was causing their deaths. Obstetricians with unclean hands and instruments were infecting the women. Semmelweis adamantly warned the medical establishment about the importance of hygiene. Sadly, he was ahead of his time. His insistence on hygiene was ignored, and he was ridiculed and drummed out of the medical establishment. It would take another forty years for Louis Pasteur to develop the germ theory of disease. Now we honor Semmelweis for his prescient understanding of the importance of hospital hygiene, and his daring to challenge the established science of his time.

That is the meaning of the Semmelweis Award. It will go to daring innovators, willing to challenge the prevailing knowledge of the time in the cause of safer medical care.

For over 15 years, RID has promoted the life-saving steps of **cleaning** and **screening** to prevent deadly and costly hospital-acquired infections (HAI's.) A stringent cleaning protocol in hospitals and screening patients for superbugs before being admitted to the hospital can drastically reduce a patient's risk of contracting an HAI.

## SEMMELEWEIS AWARD HONOREES

***2018: Our third award salutes EOS Surfaces, the Coastal Virginia-based firm whose copper-infused technology has significantly reduced hospital infections. EOS makes snap-on covers for bedrails, as well as patient overbed tables, sinks,***

***vanities, and countertops. Their products are impregnated with copper to continuously kill deadly pathogens, including the multi-drug resistant MRSA. In one clinical study, EOS's technology was found to cut deadly infections by drug-resistant germs by 78%.***

***2017: Our second award honored Evan Jones, Chairman of OpGen, for his pioneering role in making a rapid test that will identify multi-drug resistant infections without waiting days for cultures to grow. This innovation promises to be life saving. Screening patients rapidly to identify those carrying drug-resistant superbugs will help save their lives and protect other patients as well. RID applauds Evan Jones and OpGen for providing the research and technology to make rapid screening possible. OpGen exemplifies RID's guiding principle that technological innovation will enable us to defeat the scourge of hospital infections.***

***2015: Our first award honored James D. Lee, P.E. developer of dilute hydrogen peroxide technology, which can continuously rid hospital rooms of dangerous bacteria, viruses, and fungi with no toxicity to patients. The technology operates 24/7 while patients are in the room, enabling affordable, thorough cleaning. Pilot programs prove it can reduce infection rates by up to 70%.***