

Controlling infections

Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital's infection rates have dropped by 44 percent over the past five years. We credit progressive programs, as well as aggressive efforts to increase hand-washing.



Hand washing is key

One of the simplest things, hand washing, is also the most effective at preventing infections, in the hospital or out. Alcohol-based cleansers work fine (just rub until dry), unless your hands are visibly soiled. In that case, use soap and water.

Hospital infection rates	2010*	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Per every 1,000 patient days	3.6	3.8	5.3	6.7	5.9	5.7
By percentage of admissions	1.6%	1.7%	2.5%	2.3%	2.8%	2.8%
Total infections	31	72	112	132	139	134
Total patient days	8,690	18,663	20,977	22,335	23,451	23,730
Total admissions	1,999	4,178	4,566	6,548	5,005	4,874

*Through June

Note: These charts measure hospital-acquired infections only.

Types of infections	2010	2009	2008
Surgical infections	0.5%	0.0%	0.6%
Ventilator-associated pneumonia	0	0	1
Multi-drug resistant (including MRSA)	8	19	14

Targeting zero

Our current goal is zero hospital-acquired infections. We have appointed champions from each unit to help us reach our target.

Ventilator-associated pneumonia

It's not uncommon for patients who spend any length of time on a ventilator to acquire pneumonia. To address the issue, we adopted a CDC care model in 2006 that cut cases almost overnight, from an average of 13 per year to 0. We haven't had a case now for more than two years.