

Principles of Aseptic Technique

By Wanda Oliver

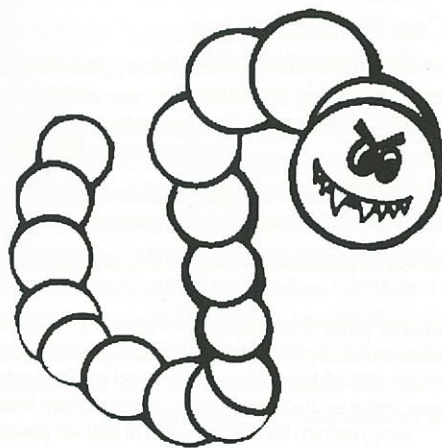
The following is a lighthearted reminder to all nurses that asepsis is a priority in the operating room in order to ensure the safety and well being of our patients.

Our aim in the O.R. is to prevent contamination of the open wound, isolate the operative site from the surrounding physical environment and create and maintain a sterile field in which surgery can be performed safely.

Hi...my name is 'Bugsy Bacteria' and I am representing the great world of the Perilous Pathogens! We live on your skin, in the air, in your hair, under your nails, on clothes, and tabletops etc. etc. etc. You, the nurse, can now have the honor of being our friends! Great! See, we are pretty hungry and feeling lonely and we know that as caring, giving human beings, Nurses would love to help us! All you need to do, is help us to get into a big, fat juicy incision line, so that we can get some grub and multiply a few billion or so!! Sounds easy so far? Never mind those with their aseptic garbage! Here's how you can help. All you have to do is:-

1. *Open a package where the sterility date has expired or the chemical indicator hasn't changed.*
2. *Keep one cuff of your gown uncovered by your glove or just turn your back on your sterile field.*
3. *Drop your suction or cautery beyond the sterile boundary and then pull them back into your sterile field.*

4. *Let unsterile personnel touch, reach over, or lean over your sterile field.*
5. *Perforate your glove - even if you don't think it's okay, leave your glove on. I can go through small holes!*



So - anyhow - these are a few hints ok. You get the idea! So.. be a sport and help us Bacteria to live a better life in the world of infection.

Author

Wanda Oliver is Staff Nurse, Operating Room, St. Paul's Hospital, Vancouver, British Columbia.

A -is for the Autoclaves - be sure you know how they work! Inadequate sterilization leaves a lovely place for Bacteria to Lurk.

S -is for Scrubbing - the rule says five and three. Remember... germs are invisible; not something you can see.



E -is for Everyone you care for - and know you've done your best. Be proud that your patient is number 'one' here in the west.

P -is for Protecting and guarding your sterile field. When medical staff come too near... your job is to make them yield!!!

T -is for Technique - Please watch what you do. A repellent doesn't always mean the water won't soak through.

I -is for Incision - We must keep it clean. For if the patient ends up with an infection - I'm sure he'll be very mean.

C -is for Contamination - in the O.R., it is a 'Taboo'. Please try to prevent this in whatever that you do.

T -is for Transmission - of 'Bugs', it's easily done. Don't let those surgeons tell you how your sterile field should be run.

E -is for Enforcing - the rules of Aseptic Technique. For allowing any of them to be broken - certainly isn't very 'chic'!

C -is for the Circulator - who must keep a good lookout. Be sure the things you open are sterile without a doubt.

H -is for Hearing what we have to say. We hope that you'll remember this - each and every day.

N -is for Nosocomial - we need not say much more. No one wants a Hospital infection knocking on their door.

I -is for Impeccable - be this, for the Patient's sake. When they're asleep, they don't have choices like they do when they're awake.

Q -is for Questioning - it is your right to do. Any item that may be unsterile, can be replaced in a moment or two.

U -is for Us All to put ourselves in the patients shoes. They have put their trust in the decisions that we choose.

E -is for our O.R. Environment - it's a responsibility we all must share. A job well done ensures a Patient that his Nurses really did CARE!!

