

## Tips for preventing infection following surgery

Most patients who have surgery do not develop an infection. However, the risk of infection in patients having surgery is about one to three out of every 100 patients. Doctors and nurses in the surgery center do many things to prevent these infections. However, there are actions that patients and family members can take to help lower the risk of infection.

### When you get home

- Avoid touching your incision area(s).
- Before and after providing care to your incision area(s), wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer and have any family member helping with your care do the same.
- If you have any signs/symptoms of an infection such as redness, pain, fever or cloudy drainage, call your doctor immediately.
- Until the incision is completely healed, always use a clean washcloth for the incision area(s). Do not use the same washcloth used for the rest of your body.
- Keep clean sheets on your bed and make sure the clothes that come in contact with your incision area are clean.
- Keep pets away from the incision area until healed.
- If you do not see caregivers clean their hands before they care for you, please ask them to do so.
- Keep all post surgery appointments with your doctor.