

MRSA (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus)

In October 2002, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a document titled Guideline for Hand Hygiene in Health-Care Settings. This technical bulletin is a synopsis of the recommendations as they relate to the use of alcohol-based hand rubs.

The guideline recommends the use of alcohol-based hand rubs to protect patients in health care settings by reducing the risk of cross infection. If hands are visibly dirty or contaminated, then traditional hand washing will continue to be the decontaminating method of choice...if not, then alcohol-based hand rubs should be used.

Compliance with proper hand hygiene practices leads to reductions in the number of illnesses associated with cross infection. In fact, Dr. Julie Gerberding of the CDC states...“clean hands are the single most important factor in preventing the spread of dangerous germs and antibiotic resistance in health care settings”. In a press release by the CDC, it is estimated that each year nearly 2 million patients in the U.S. get an infection in hospitals, and about 90,000 of these patients die as a result of their infection. Studies indicate that up to one third of these infections are preventable and a substantial portion of these infections result from cross infection or transmission of microorganisms by the hands of health care workers. Partly to blame for this is the fact that traditional methods of hand decontamination (i.e., washing with soap and water) have experienced poor compliance by health care workers. Data show that compliance with hand hygiene protocols increases with health care personnel when alcohol-based hand rubs are used because they are more convenient. In addition to improving compliance, it appears that these products may actually reduce the number of bacteria on the hands more effectively than washing hand with soap and water.

The guideline states...“the cost of hand hygiene products should not be the primary factor influencing product selection”. In this selection process, health care workers’ input is essential. An effective product with low irritation potential should be selected. In addition, employee input regarding the feel, fragrance and skin toleration should be considered.

The introduction of alcohol-based hand rubs should be part of a multidisciplinary hand hygiene program that includes participation of health care workers, educational and motivational programs as well as administrative support in terms of institutional priority.

Think about it...if the use of better hand hygiene products improves hand hygiene practices, then preventing even a few additional health care associated infections per year will lead to savings that will exceed any extra costs for better hand hygiene products!

HealthLink’s new GBG AloeGel® is an instant hand sanitizer/antiseptic with moisturizers and skin conditioners. It is designed to be used by health care professionals to aid in the prevention of nosocomial infection without compromising the skin’s integrity.

GBG AloeGel’s® active ingredient is ethyl alcohol (62%). It has been shown to be rapidly bactericidal...killing 99.9% of microorganisms in 15 seconds. In laboratory tests, GBG AloeGel® has been shown effective against the following: Salmonella typhi, Staphylococcus aureus (including MRSA), Pseudomonas aeruginosa, Enterococcus faecalis (VRE), Escherichia coli, Candida albicans and other related organisms. In addition, the product contains Aloe Vera Gel, Vitamin E, Glycerin, and Isopropyl Myristate to help reduce dryness and maintain the skin’s natural balance.

Available in 4 oz. flip-top bottle, 18 oz. pump bottles or an 800 ml bag-in-box, GBG AloeGel® is the perfect product to help provide a safer, healthier work place!

To view the entire CDC guideline, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5116a1.htm>