

# Best Practices in a Homeless clinic

Holly Gillon RN, Ed.S., MSN,  
Family Nurse Practitioner

# Declaration

- I am not associated with any company which will profit from my presentation of this information

# Objectives

- 1. The Clinician will be able to state four possible examples of how disease can be spread within the outpatient setting.
- 2. The Clinician will be able to give an example of infection control practices which will diminish the spread of communicable disease in the outpatient setting.
- 3. The Clinician will be able to discuss preventive practices to control the spread of disease in the office setting.

# Barriers and Obstacles to Treatment

- Lack of Transportation
- Poor Nutrition
- Alienation from Healthcare system
- Lack of preventive care
- Literacy difficulties
- Disorganization
- Difficulty keeping appointments and adhering to medical plans

# On average, homeless adults have 8 to 9 concurrent medical illnesses

- Arthritis
- Asthma /Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease /  
Pneumonia / TB
- DM
- HIV/AIDS
- HTN / PVD
- STIs
- Mental Health Issues
  - Depression/Dementia/Personality Disorder/PTSD/  
Schizophrenia

# Diseases which can be spread through respiratory droplets

- Colds / Flu / TB
- How far will germs spread when a person coughs?
- How long should you wash your hands for?
- How long should you use a hand sanitizer for?
- What percentage of alcohol should the hand sanitizer contain?

# Alcohol Hand Sanitizer

- What percentage of alcohol do you want in a hand sanitizer?
- Emerging infectious Diseases: 60% minimum / apply enough product to palms of hands to fully wet your hands, then rubbing your hands together for as long as 25 seconds or until they are dry

# How far will germs spray?

- How far will germs spread when a person coughs?
- Up to 6 feet away
- Wake Forest Baptist research: flu virus in small particles up to 6 feet from patient's head



# Wash your hands for How Long?

- How long should you wash your hands for?
- Long enough to sing Happy Birthday twice.

# TB

- Spread through respiratory droplets (coughing, singing)
- PPD – CDC recommends baseline two step testing followed by annual testing (repeated 1-4 wks after neg)
  - Skin test read 48 to 72 hours after being done
- What does it mean if your skin test is positive?
- Should you get another PPD if it is ever positive?
- Know the sx of TB

# Face Mask vs Respirators

- Face Mask
  - Loose-fitting
  - Disposable
  - If worn properly – blocks large-particle droplet
  - Does not filter or block very small particles transmitted by coughs/sneezes
- Respirator
  - Close facial fit (not for children / persons w facial hair)
  - N95 – blocks 95% of very small test particles
  - Can require more effort to breathe thru
  - Key is proper fit

# Environmental Cleaning

- Routine cleaning / disinfection of environmental surfaces most likely to become contaminated w/ pathogens
- Cleaning surfaces – use soap – precedes disinfection
- Sanitizing solution -  
<http://www.epa.gov/oppad001/chemregindex.htm>
  - 1tbsp of bleach to 1 quart of water
- Hand washing
- Always a good practice to WEAR GLOVES when performing environmental cleaning

# Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette

- Offer mask to coughing /sneezing clients
- Post signs to cover mouth/nose when coughing / sneezing
- Provide tissues and no-touch receptacle for disposal
- Provide resources for performing hand hygiene near waiting areas
- Encourage clients w/respiratory symptoms to sit away from others

# Head Lice

- Nits
  - are lice eggs
  - appear as yellow, white or same color as hair if live
  - are often confused w/dandruff, scabs or hair spray droplets
  - Usually take 8 to 9 days to hatch
- Nymph – an immature louse – hatched from nit – mature into adults in 9 to 12 days – needs blood to live
- Adult – size of sesame seed – grayish white – must feed on blood – will die within one or two days w/o blood supply

# Head Lice

- Are not considered a public health hazard
- Are not known to spread disease

# Environmental Control of Head Lice

- Vacuum floor/furniture
- Do not use fumigant sprays/fogs – they are not necessary and can be toxic if inhaled
- Machine wash and dry cloth items using hot water (130 deg F) and high heat drying cycle
- Will die within one or two days w/o blood supply



# Causes

- allergic reaction
- bacterial infection
- viral infection

# Cleaning

Alcohol surfaces and take a 10 min break before using room again

# Body Fluids Left Behind

- Soap and water
- Followed by disinfectant
- Can use enzyme product prior to Soap and water

# Back Packs and Belongings

- Have a designated area for these items to be left while the client is in the office
- Have a schedule of cleaning of that area daily

# Bed Bugs

Re-emerge in 1990s

travel – world-wide=frequency of encounters

excellent hitch hikers – spend a night – take them  
with you to your next location

changes in pest management

routine mgmt replaced w/targeted applications

resistance to modern day pesticides

purchase of used/rental furniture/reconditioned  
mattresses

taking home discarded items that are infested

# Why aren't infestations recognized sooner

- Secretive habits exhibited by bed bugs
- Active only at night
- Feed on people while asleep
- Bite is painless and many people must first become sensitized to the bite before developing symptoms
- Delayed reactions of several weeks or more
- Confuse bites w/allergic reactions/poison ivy/scabies
- Bed bugs can live for many months in absence of host

# Not Considered a Serious Disease Threat

- Although over 28 disease pathogens have been found in bed bugs, transmission of these pathogens to humans has never been documented and is considered highly unlikely. For this reason, they are not considered a serious disease threat. Their medical significance is mainly limited to the itching and inflammation associated with their bite.

- do not discriminate based on one's social status or the cleanliness of their home
- Crowded and cluttered living conditions are one of the more challenging obstacles to overcome in an eradication effort

# Protection

- Being aware of the risk
- Protecting self when traveling
- Isolate luggage upon return
- Check Mattresses monthly
- Bed Bug Central Website for products
  - encasement must have a zipper that bugs cannot escape
  - J&K Canine Academy in the development of bed bug sniffing dogs



# If your residence becomes infested

- **Do not change where you sleep**
- Never treat a bed with pesticides unless you are using a product that has been specifically designed and intended for such use

# Draining Wounds - MRSA

- Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus – resistant to certain antibiotics called beta-lactams.
- Most MRSA infections are skin infections
  - Red, swollen, painful, pus/pustules/drainage
- 2% of population has MRSA colonized in nose
- Spread by having contact w/someone's skin infection or personal items that they have touched w/their skin

# Disinfecting the Environment

- Disinfectants are regulated by the EPA
- EPA registration number on product label
- Follow label instructions for use
- Most mfgs provide a list of germs on the label that the product can destroy
- Follow any precautions on label such as wearing gloves
- Routine laundry procedures will help make clothes safe to wear or touch

# Surfaces to clean

- Surfaces that could come in contact w/uncovered infections
- Shared equipment that comes into contact w/skin
  - Helmets, protective gear, doorknobs, areas around the home/office that have come in contact w/wound/drainage or contaminated hands

# Is it Clean?

- Use a barrier like a towel or clothing between your skin and the surface
- Showering immediately after activities where you have direct skin contact w/shared surfaces
- Cleaning your hands regularly
- Keeping cuts and scrapes clean and covered w/ bandages until healed

# How is MRSA spread?

- Close skin – skin contact
- Openings in the skin
- Contaminated items and surfaces
- Crowded living conditions
- Poor hygiene

# Best defense is good hygiene

- Keep your hands clean
- Use a barrier on your cuts and open wounds
- Can get in thru small openings such as hair follicle
- Clothing or towels can serve as a barrier between you and any surface
- Shower immediately after activities that involve direct skin contact with others
- Avoid sharing personal items such as towels or razors
- Teach your client to maintain a clean environment

# Funky Fingernails

- Toenails are much more likely to be infected than fingernails
- most often seen in adults
- The fungi that cause them live in warm, moist areas
  - public swimming pools, gyms, or shower rooms
- people who sweat a lot often can have these infections



# You are at higher risk of getting a fungal nail infection if you:

- Get manicures or pedicures with infected tools that have not been properly disinfected
- Exposed to the fungus thru minor skin or nail injuries or thru deformed nail or nail disease
- Have moist skin for a long time
- Have immune system problems
  - Such as elderly diabetic clients
- Wear closed-in footwear

# Shaking Hands

- more popular beliefs -medieval strangers shaking hands to ensure no weapons would be drawn
- Thomas Jefferson -ended the practice of bowing - preferring a handshake instead to separate any notions of monarchy from the American presidency
- the cattle market
- All of this means that when you shake someone's hand or if you have handled something that has been contaminated by someone else's hand(s) - those disease causing organisms will likely now be on your hands.

# Nail Fungus

- it may take up to a year for a new clear nail to grow
- Good general health and hygiene help prevent fungal infections.
- Do not share tools used for manicures and pedicures.
- Keep your skin clean and dry.
- Take proper care of your nails.
- Wash and dry your hands thoroughly after contact with any fungal infection.

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