



INFECTION CONTROL PRACTICES IN NURSING NURSES BREAKING THE CHAIN OF INFECTION.

Keeping an eye on infection

In nursing, infection control is one of the most crucial aspects and deserves utmost attention. Nurses are at the frontline of patient care, and their actions can play a key role in preventing the spread of infections within healthcare settings. Effective infection control not only protects patients but also safeguards healthcare workers and visitors. Let's take a look at some of the ways nurses can help prevent infection:

Hand Hygiene

Proper hand hygiene is probably the most effective method to prevent infections. Nurses must clean their hands before and after every patient contact, before performing any aseptic procedure and after exposure to body fluids. Both soap and water or alcohol-based hand rubs can be used, depending on the situation. They should strictly follow the "Five Moments for Hand Hygiene" recommended by the WHO - before touching a patient, before clean/aseptic procedures, after exposure to body fluids, after touching a patient and after touching the patient's surroundings. Hand hygiene goes a long way in helping minimise infection risks.

Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal Protective Equipment, or PPE, includes gloves, masks, gowns, face shields and goggles. They all have a specific purpose. For eg, gloves protect against direct contact with infectious materials, masks prevent droplet transmission and gowns shield clothing and skin from contamination. It is important that nurses follow correct donning (putting on) and doffing (removal) techniques to prevent cross-contamination. Proper disposal of used PPE is vital to avoid spreading pathogens.

Aseptic and Sterile Techniques

It is also essential to ensure sterility during procedures such as catheter insertion, wound dressing or intravenous line management. Using sterile gloves, instruments and dressings, along with ensuring a clean work environment,



helps prevent hospital-acquired infections (HAIs).

Environmental cleaning and waste disposal

Clean surroundings are essential for infection control. Surfaces that come into frequent contact like bed rails, medical devices and doorknobs, should be disinfected regularly. It is also imperative that medical waste is segregated and disposed of in colour-coded bins as per biomedical waste management guidelines.

Staff Training and Compliance

Continuous education and adherence to infection control protocols are essential. Nurses need to stay updated with infection prevention guidelines, participate in training sessions and follow institutional policies strictly.

Prevention of infection

Infection control is a professional responsibility. **By following simple yet effective practices like hand hygiene, proper use of PPE and maintaining a clean environment, nurses can effectively prevent infections and promote patient safety.**