Personal Hygiene Fatality File

Poor Hand Hygiene

Poor hand hygiene compliance has been linked to increased hospital-acquired infections (HAIs), and health care providers have been sued for negligence resulting in HAIs. With hand hygiene compliance a Joint Commission accreditation requirement and standard of care, poor hand hygiene compliance can be named as a causal factor for an HAI in a liability suit against a healthcare organization or individual provider.

A woman in a hospital to give birth contracted genital herpes after nurses placed her in the same room as a patient showing signs of an active herpes infection. **The nurses then failed to wash their hands properly when moving from the infected patient to others.** In another situation, a hidden camera positioned outside an operating room showed that about half of the physicians entering the room did not wash their hands before going inside.

Poor infection control practices, including not following proper hand hygiene practices, led to six patients being hospitalized with staph infections at a South Carolina clinic. One of the patients died from the infection.