

Progress on Bloodstream-Associated Infections

With recent changes in dialysis payment, dialysis providers will now be held accountable for reducing bloodstream-associated infections. Research shows that when health care professionals are educated and evaluated on infection control requirements and they follow the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), bloodstream-associated infections can be reduced dramatically. This is why our affiliate, Dialysis Patient Citizens (DPC), continues to remain active with the CDC Bloodstream Infection Collaborative, including organizing patient focus groups to identify how patients can help. The CDC recently announced a 46% decrease in central-line associated bloodstream infections.

Bloodstream infections are often preventable, which is why we are working together to help empower patients to ensure they are in control and knowledgeable about their care. Such infections are acquired at hospitals as well as outpatient locations, including your primary care physician's office, dialysis clinic, or any other health care facilities.

The CDC now recommends annual education of patients and when they receive a new access or change in access type.

For patients with catheters the following education is critical:

1. Hand hygiene
2. General access care at home (e.g., bathing with a catheter)
3. Signs and symptoms of infection
4. How to respond if problems with catheter develop outside of the dialysis center
5. Risks associated with catheters/importance of permanent access
6. Basic infection control practices during catheter accessing process (as a means to engage patients)

For patients with other access types:

1. Hand hygiene
2. Washing the access site prior to treatment
3. General access care at home (e.g., don't scratch or pick at the site)
4. Signs and symptoms of infection
5. How to respond if problems with access develop outside of the dialysis center
6. Basic infection control practices during cannulation process (as a means to engage

patients)

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