Staph Infection: Hospitals Battle Against A Deadly Menace

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Staph Infection: Hospitals Battle Against A Deadly Menace

Mckenzie Lamos (Mentor: Rob Wilson, Ph.D)

Introduction:

- Staphylococcus aureus can be found in healthy individuals, but can cause serious problems when it moves into the bloodstream.
- Symptoms range from a skin rash, low blood pressure, and fever.
- Patients in the ICU or that have chronic conditions such as diabetes or cancer are at a greater risk of getting the infection.
- The principal mode of transmission is through the contaminated hands of hospital staff.
- This bacteria is very adaptable and can easily become resistant to many antibiotics and treatment methods.

Research Findings:

- Over 119,000 patients had a bloodstream staph infection and nearly 20,00 of those died.
- Hand hygiene is one of the most important actions that needs to be continually addressed and reinforced.
- Proper protective wear should be worn by medical staff as well as isolating patients in separate rooms when necessary.
- Vancomycin remains the standard reference treatment for bloodstream infections.
- New IV treatment options such as ceftaroline are being clinically tested.

Sources:

- The CDC “Staphylococcus aureus in Healthcare Settings.”
- The CDC “Strategies to Prevent Hospital-onset Staphylococcus aureus Bloodstream Infections in Acute Care Facilities.”

Conclusion:

- Preventative measures must be taken to decrease the number of cases and the spread.
- Reinforcement of these measures is essential so prevention is effective long term.
- With doctors fearing the bacteria may become untreatable, prevention (especially in hospital settings) is extremely important.
- Education of hospital staff and patients is vital for the decline in cases.

Skin rash and boil caused by staph infection.

The bacteria spreads easily from physician to patient.

Hand washing is an important preventative measure.

Although progress is being made, year to year progression is now on a slow decline.