

# Preventing and Reporting SSI

HAI Reporting and Prevention Program

For Health Professionals

**Surgical Site Infections**, or SSIs, are procedure-associated healthcare associated infections resulting from either an incisional or organ space infection occurring within 30 days after an inpatient or outpatient surgery or within 1 year if an implant device is present.

## Before Surgery ensure your team:

- Wash hands before and after patient care, and scrub hands to the elbows prior to surgery.
- Assess patient's risk factors, including health status, smoking, past medical history, and medications or medicinal remedies.
- Educate patient and family regarding preparation for surgery, smoking cessation, diet, antibiotic compliance, post op care, warning signs, and activity precautions.
- Initiate facility approved evidence based pre-surgery protocols. Know when and how to perform skin preps, such as hair removal, colon preps, antimicrobial prophylaxis, nasal screens, and blood glucose checks.

## During Surgery ensure your team:

- Use facility approved checklist and appropriate hand-off communication to reduce errors.
- Wear appropriate protection, such as cap, gown, sterile gloves, or shoe covers.
- Adhere to your facility's policy related to hygiene, such as finger nail polish, nail length, or jewelry.
- Minimize traffic flow in high risk areas.
- Adhere to approved standard principles of operating room asepsis.
- Maintain sterile technique in insertion of central lines, catheters, surgical drains, and other intravascular devices.

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To combat the growing burden of HAIs in the healthcare setting, Alabama passed the Mike Denton Infection Reporting Act which requires the monitoring and reporting of SSIs associated with particular surgeries within acute care facilities. The major goal is to establish a uniform method of HAI data collection, reporting, and evaluation for the prevention of SSIs.

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## After Surgery ensure your team:

- Monitor for signs and symptoms of an SSI.
- Avoid unnecessary use of invasive devices, such as urinary catheters, central lines, intravenous lines or surgical drains.
- Wash hands before and after patient care.
- Reinforce wound care education, including proper hand washing, wound care, activity precautions, and monitoring for signs and symptoms of infection.
- Observe the patient or family members perform wound care and/or dressing changes prior to discharge to ensure they are using the best technique.



## Post Discharge Surveillance

Alabama healthcare facilities must report colon surgery and abdominal hysterectomy SSI's, including those occurring after discharge, to the Alabama Department of Public Health. Because most SSIs occur post discharge and may not require readmission to the hospital, facilities are strongly encouraged to develop and implement a Post Discharge Surveillance System best suited for their facility.

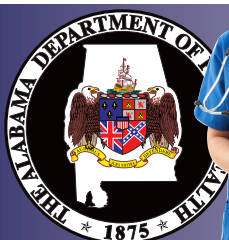
### REMINDER:

Monitor and report signs and symptoms indicating a SSI in the patient's medical records.

## Best practices include:

Maintaining communications with other facilities to monitor for patients returning to other locations.

Surgeon surveys and patient surveys can be used for post discharge surveillance.



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