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Infection Control



Infection Prevention & Control

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Influenza & Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

There's been much debate, and even controversy, surrounding why this RSV and Influenza season has been so severe. Many ask if it is the removal of masking and increase in travel or socializing after three (3) years of a pandemic. Could the attention to infection prevention and control have actually saved us from these common viruses over the past few years? Or is there actually an 'immunity debt'?

Immunity debt is a much publicized and increasingly controversial topic describing the notion that with the lack of spread / reduced exposure in respiratory viruses since 2020 (due to pandemic mitigation) our immune systems are left at a disadvantage when fighting off even common infections. Seem reasonable? Maybe. However, individuals and experts are now pushing back on this concept.

Immunology experts across Canada are not yet convinced that this year's flu season will be more deadly or lead to a greater number of hospitalizations than previous years.

When it comes to *immunity debt*, immunology experts actually find this idea unclear and ultimately unhelpful. In nature, people (particularly children) will ultimately get sick and it has nothing to do with a more compromised immune system. Rather, it is thought an accumulated 'cohort effect' - especially among older children and teens who have richer social networks with more potential hosts, are unmasked and in social contact with each other - is where we should expect to see more cases of respiratory illnesses.

Even without change in immunological status, an absolute increase in the number of hosts will mean there will be a greater number of cases.

Infection, Prevention and Control (IP&C) precautions - such as hand washing, masking and staying home when ill - still remain the most effective ways to prevent the spread of infections.



Urinary Tract Infections

What is a Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)?

UTIs are common infections that happen when bacteria, often from the skin or rectum, enter the urethra, and infect the urinary tract. These infections can affect several parts of the urinary tract, but the most common type is a bladder infection. Kidney infection (pyelonephritis) - another type of UTI - is less common, but more serious than bladder infections.

Symptoms of a bladder infection can include:

- ◆ Pain or burning while urinating
- ◆ Frequent urination
- ◆ Feeling the need to urinate despite having an empty bladder
- ◆ Bloody urine
- ◆ Pressure or cramping in the groin or lower abdomen

Symptoms of a kidney infection can include:

- ◆ Fever
- ◆ Chills
- ◆ Lower back pain or pain in the side of your back
- ◆ Nausea or vomiting

You can help prevent UTIs by doing the following:

- ◆ Stay well hydrated
- ◆ Take showers instead of baths
- ◆ Minimize sprays or powders in the genital area

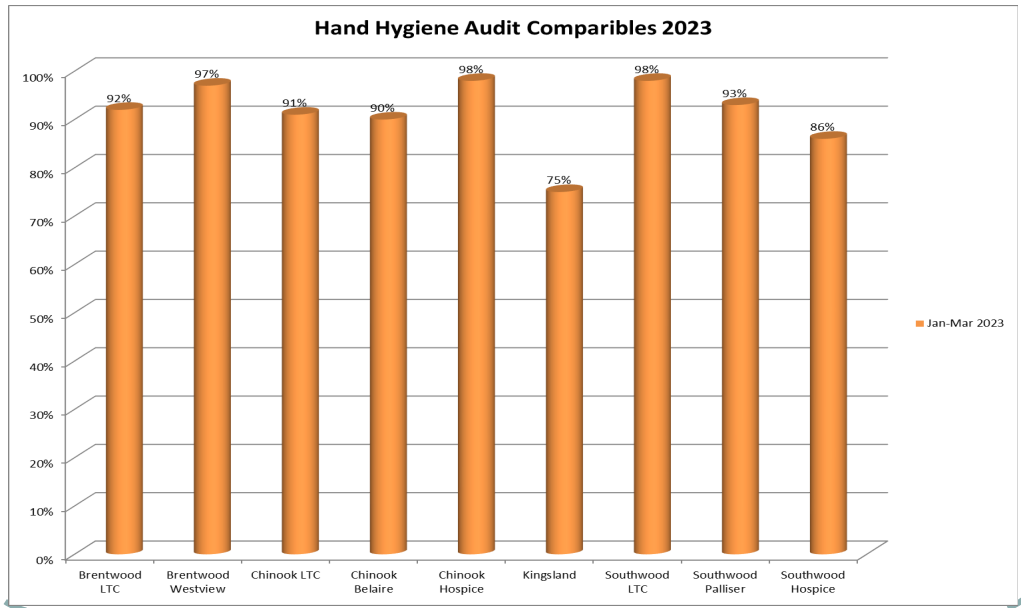




Hand Hygiene Audit Results

Hand Hygiene Auditing is done on a monthly basis at all Intercare sites. During these audits, the “*Four (4) Moments of Hand Hygiene*” are observed, as well as proper glove use.

The graph below shows quarterly results generated from monthly **Hand Hygiene Auditing** at Intercare sites.



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Audit Results

All Intercare Care Homes complete **PPE audits** monthly with Quarterly summaries.

The graph below shows quarterly results generated from monthly **PPE Auditing** at Intercare sites.

