

**INFECTION  
CONTROL**<sup>®</sup>

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**September/October 1983**

**Volume 4/Number 5**

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University Professor Dr. B. Velimirovic

**Ignaz Philipp Semmelweis,  
The Prophet of Bacteriology**

Helmut Wyklicky, MD, and Manfred Skopec, PhD

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An Overview with Emphasis on Epidemics**

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and Grayson B. Miller, Jr., MD

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# THE LAST THING YOUR HOSPITAL NEEDS

## The threat of nosocomial infection

Between 4% and 8% of all hospitalized patients develop an infection at some time during their stay,<sup>1</sup> and such infections usually add to the length and cost of hospitalization.

Protecting patients and staff from nosocomial infection is becoming more difficult due to changing patterns of bacterial infection and the emergence of resistant bacteria, most notably methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*.<sup>2,3</sup>

## The key to management

Pathogenic bacteria are easily transmitted by the hands of physicians, nurses, technicians, and other hospital personnel.<sup>4</sup>

Both the Center for Disease Control and the American Hospital Association consider handwashing the single most important procedure in preventing nosocomial infection and recommend handwashing after every patient contact.<sup>4</sup> An increase in nosocomial infection that is transmitted by serial direct contact indicates suboptimal handwashing practices and antiseptic technique.<sup>5</sup>



## A program for prevention

Because proper hand-washing techniques are so important in the prevention of nosocomial infection, Winthrop has developed a comprehensive program of educational materials for every member of the hospital staff. The in-service program includes two films on handwashing, a slide/tape presentation, hand-washing instruction wall charts, and dispenser maintenance instructions.

If you would like more information, please write to Professional Services Department, Winthrop Laboratories,

90 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016,  
or contact your Winthrop representative.

**References:** 1. Infection control for the obstetric patient and the newborn infant. *NAACOG Tech Bull* 1981; March. 2. Kraybill EN: Needs of the term infant, in Avery GB (ed): *Neonatology*, ed 2. Philadelphia, Lippincott, 1981, p 226. 3. Haley RW, Hightower AW, Khabbaz RF, et al: The emergence of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* infections in United States hospitals: Possible role of the house staff-patient transfer circuit. *Ann Intern Med* 1982; 97:297-308. 4. Albert RK, Condie F: Hand-washing patterns in medical intensive-care units. *N Engl J Med* 1981; 24:1465-1466. 5. Wenzel RP: The emergence of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*. *Ann Intern Med* 1982; 97:440-442.



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Rotavirus infections have been singled out as the most prevalent cause of nonbacterial gastroenteritis among children.<sup>1</sup> Recently, frequent outbreaks of rotavirus infections among adults have been reported,<sup>2,3</sup> as well as epidemic-proportion outbreaks among the geriatric population.<sup>4,5</sup> Subsequent patient dehydration and electrolyte loss make rapid diagnosis of this viral agent critical.

## Early Diagnosis Important


Presently, most patients with gastroenteritis are routinely tested for pathogenic bacteria first. Since rotavirus infections are fast-spreading, especially in the hospital setting, a definitive diagnosis is important. Early diagnosis of rotavirus allows the physician to take proper isolation steps, establish epidemiologic control, prescribe appropriate therapy and reassure the family and patient as to the nature of the illness.

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<sup>1</sup>WHO Scientific Working Group: Rotavirus and other viral diarrhoeas. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 58: 183-198; 1980.

<sup>2</sup>Meurman, O; Laine, M: Rotavirus epidemic in adults. *N. Eng. J. Med.* 296: 1298-1299; 1977.

<sup>3</sup>Lycke, E; Blomberg, J; Berg, G; et al.: Epidemic acute diarrhoea in adults associated with infantile gastroenteritis virus. *Lancet* 2: 1056-1057; 1978.

<sup>4</sup>Marrie, T; Lee, S; Faulkner, R; Ethier, J; and Young, C: Rotavirus infection in a geriatric population. *Arch. Intern. Med.* 142: 313-316; 1982

<sup>5</sup>Cubitt, W. D.: Rotavirus infection: an unexpected hazard in units caring for the elderly. *Geriatric Medicine Today* Vol. 1, No. 2; 1982.

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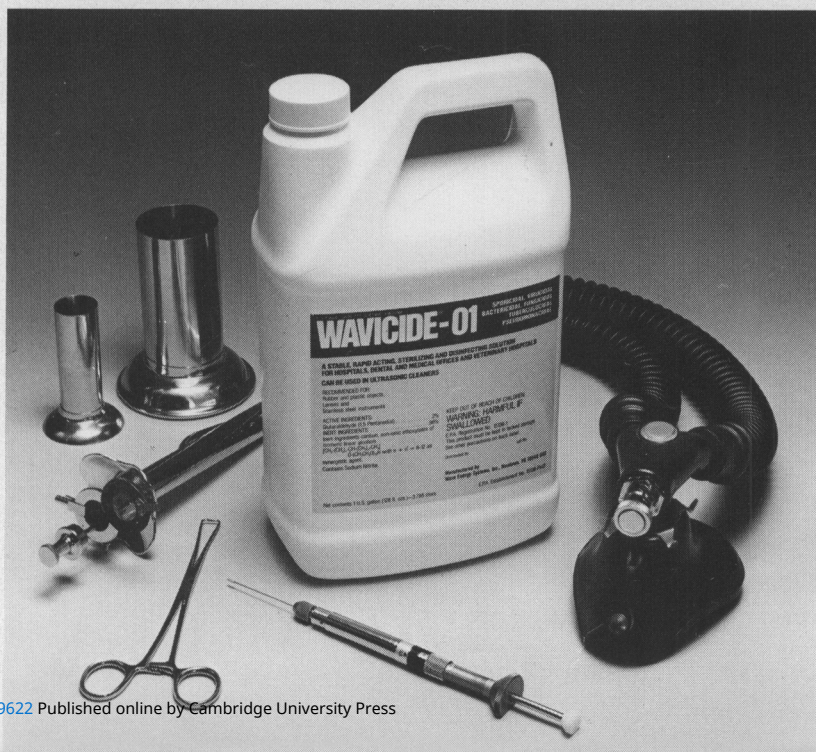
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# A Nosocomial UTI Can Mean the Difference Between Life and Death.

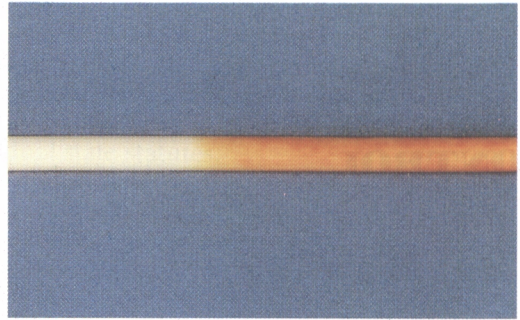
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1. Platt R, Polk BF, Murdock B, Rosner B: Mortality associated with nosocomial urinary-tract infection. *N Engl J Med* 1982, 307:637-642.

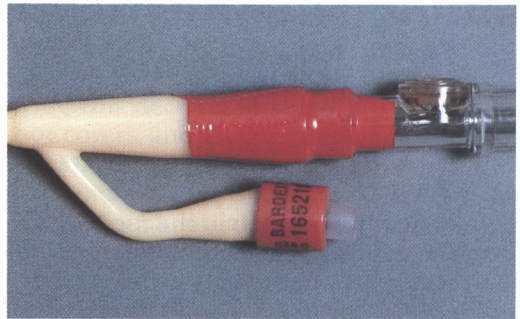


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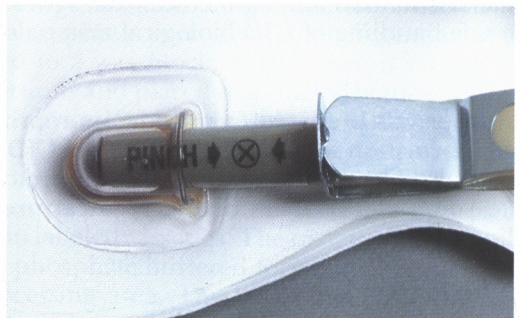
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