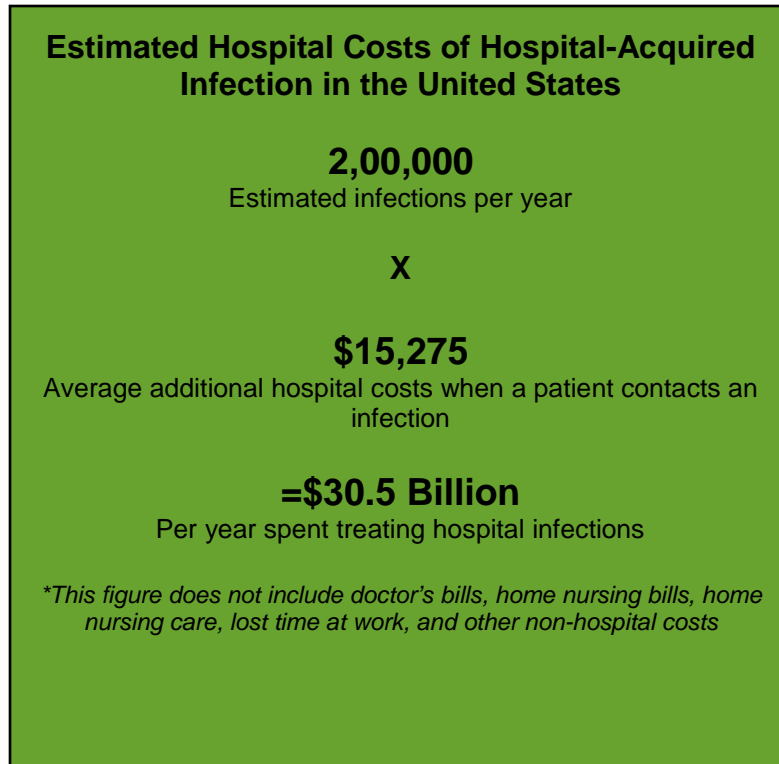


Hospital-Acquired Infections By the Numbers

*The following information is provided by RID- the Committee to Reduce Infection Deaths.

Many hospital administrators worry that they can't afford to implement better infection control strategies. The following numbers prove that the truth is, they can't afford not to.

The heavy financial burden of hospital-acquired infections:



...Other interesting facts regarding hospital costs:

- The average charge for patients who developed an infection was \$173,206. This was nearly **four times as high** as for patients admitted with the same diagnosis and severity of illness who did not contract an infection. Their average charge was \$44,367.
- The 11,688 infections reported in 2005 added over **2 billion dollars** in hospital charges that year.
- Post surgical wound infections **more than double a patient's hospital costs**. When a patient develops an infection after surgery, the cost of care increases 119% at a teaching hospital and 101% at a community hospital.
- Staph infections incur hospital costs that amount to more than triple the average hospital costs of other patients.
- A recent survey of 55 hospitals, where the infection rate averaged only 4.09% - well below the national average - showed that treating these infections wiped out inpatient operating profits.

Facts on the spread of infections:

- In 2003, the Society for Healthcare Epidemiologists of America warned that although hospitals have infection prevention programs, 'there is little evidence of control in most facilities'
- When doctors and nurses lean over a patient with MRSA, the white coats and uniforms pick up bacteria 65% of the time, allowing it to be carried to other patients

- Nearly three quarters of patients' room are contaminated with MRSA and VRE
- One study showed that when nurses walk into a room occupied by a patient with MRSA and has no patient contact, but touches objects in the room, the nurse's gloves are contaminated 42% of the time when leaving the room
- Seventy to ninety percent of patients carrying MRSA are unknown
- One study showed that 77% of blood pressure cuffs that are rolled from room to room in the hospital were contaminated with MRSA
- The U.S. and Japan have the worst records among developed nations of failing to control the rapid rise of drug-resistant hospital infections
- A study by the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology suggests that up to 1.2 million hospital patients across the US may be infected every year
- The above rate is between 8 and 11 times greater than previous MRSA estimates.
- In 1974, the CDC estimated that 2 percent of the staph infections occurring in medical facilities were cases of MRSA; in 2004, the estimate has risen to 63 percent
- Infections contracted in hospitals are the fourth largest killer in America.
- An estimated 103,000 die as a result of hospital-acquired infections. This is as many deaths as from AIDS, breast cancer, and auto accidents combined.
- 18,000 people a year die because they don't have health insurance. Five times as many people die each year from hospital infections, and most of them are insured.
- "...Infections are almost entirely preventable. How? ...Through taking precautions to prevent these bacteria from spreading to other patients" -Committee to Reduce Infection Deaths. Few hospitals have taken the necessary precautions.