6 WAYS TO BE A SAFE PATIENT

1. **SPEAK UP.**
   Talk to your doctor about all questions or worries you have. Ask them what they are doing to protect you.
   - If you have a catheter, ask each day if it is necessary.
   - Ask your doctor how he/she prevents surgical site infections. Also ask how you can prepare for surgery to reduce your infection risk.

2. **KEEP HANDS CLEAN.**
   Be sure everyone cleans their hands before touching you.

3. **GET SMART ABOUT ANTIBIOTICS.**
   Ask if tests will be done to make sure the right antibiotic is prescribed.

4. **KNOW THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF INFECTION.**
   Some skin infections, such as MRSA, appear as redness, pain, or drainage at an IV catheter site or surgery site. Often these symptoms come with a fever. Tell your doctor if you have these symptoms.

5. **WATCH OUT FOR DEADLY DIARRHEA. (AKA C. difficile)**
   Tell your doctor if you have 3 or more diarrhea episodes in 24 hours, especially if you have been taking an antibiotic.

6. **PROTECT YOURSELF.**
   Get vaccinated against flu and other infections to avoid complications.

**WHAT PATIENTS CAN DO**

**BE INFORMED. BE EMPOWERED. BE PREPARED.**

HEALTHCARE-ASSOCIATED INFECTIONS