

The Hospital Room

Narrator

When you're in the hospital it's important to ask everyone coming into your room to wash or sanitize their hands. But can you pick up dangerous bacteria from surfaces inside your hospital room?

Vicki Brinsko, RN

Patients' hospital rooms can be made as safe as possible by making sure that the room is kept environmentally as clean as possible. Emptying the trash, mopping the floor, wiping down horizontal surfaces are all extremely important. The environmental service worker uses an EPA hospital approved disinfectant that will kill germs usually on contact to wipe down these horizontal high-touch surface areas, even while the patient is still in the room.

Dr. Michael Bell

When someone brings you a beautiful bouquet of flowers or a box of cookies, those surfaces have bacteria, too. The key is not to deliver those bacteria to one of your vulnerable places, like your wound or your I.V. site.

Narrator

But the fact is most bacteria hitch a ride on humans.

Dr. William Schaffner

Most family members think that those items may be a major source of infection for the patient. In truth, it's not. We and the patients themselves with our bacteria are the major source. But nonetheless, we try to keep that environment as clean as possible, and we use disinfectants in the hospital that you and I don't use at home. They're much more powerful.

Narrator

So the hospital will clean the room. But to cut down on your risk of infection, wash your hands and make sure all those who come in contact with you wash theirs.