

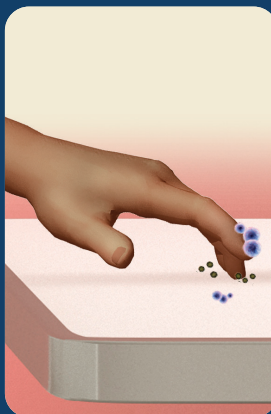
GERMS LIVE ON THE SKIN.

WHERE IS THE RISK?

Know where germs live to stop spread
and protect patients

Germs spread through touch.

- Many germs grow on healthy skin.
- Germs on skin can get onto surfaces, other people, and things that will touch other people.
- Skin – especially hands – carries many germs and spreads them easily.
- When one's hands touch surfaces, germs can spread from those surfaces to that person and to others.



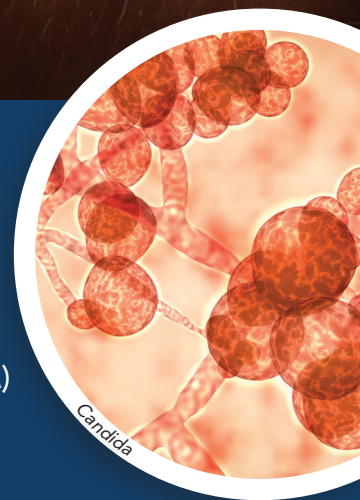
Germs spread by bypassing or breaking down the body's defenses.

- Healthcare tasks often involve breaking the skin.
- Breaking the skin – from putting in an IV, drawing blood, surgery, or trauma – creates a pathway for germs to spread into the body.



Germs That Live on Skin

- *Staphylococcus aureus* (staph, including MRSA)
- *Streptococcus* (strep)
- *Candida* (including *C. auris*)



Healthcare Tasks Involving Skin

- Anything that involves touch
- Needlesticks
- Surgery

Infection Control Actions to Reduce Risk

- Hand hygiene
- Appropriate glove use
- Injection safety
- Cleaning and disinfection
- Source control (covering cuts and wounds)



U.S. Department of
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