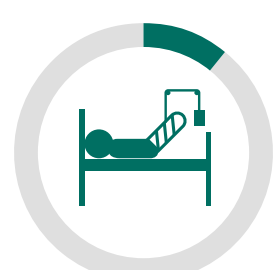


# STOP INFECTIONS AFTER SURGERY

## WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Patients develop infections when **bacteria get into incisions made during surgery**. These affect patients in both...

### LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES



More than **1 in 10 people** who have surgery in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) get **surgical site infections (SSIs)**

People's risk of SSI in LMICs is **3 TO 5 TIMES HIGHER** than in high-income countries



Up to **1 in 5 women** in Africa who deliver their baby by caesarean section get a **wound infection**

### HIGH-INCOME COUNTRIES

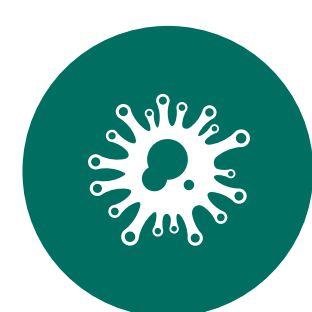


In Europe, SSIs affect more than **500 000 PEOPLE** per year costing up to **€ 19 BILLION**

Around **1%** of people who have surgery in the **USA** get an SSI



In the USA, SSIs contribute to patients spending more than **400 000 extra days** in hospital, costing **US\$ 10 BILLION** per year



SSIs can be caused by bacteria that are **resistant to commonly-used antibiotics**



SSIs threaten the lives of **millions** of surgical patients **each year** and contribute to the spread of **antibiotic resistance**

## WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

A range of precautions - **before, during and after surgery** - reduces the risk of infection



### BEFORE SURGERY



Ensure patients bathe or shower



Do not shave patients



Only use antibiotics when recommended

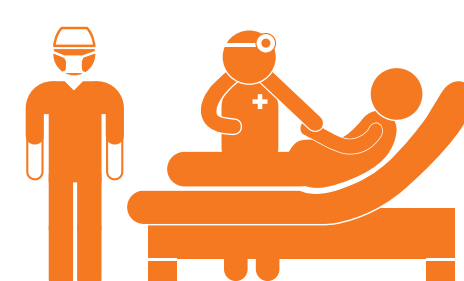


Use chlorhexidine alcohol-based antiseptic solutions to prepare skin



Surgical scrub technique: hand wash or alcohol-based handrub

### DURING SURGERY



Limit the number of people and doors being opened



Ensure all surgical equipment is sterile and maintain asepsis throughout surgery



### AFTER SURGERY



Do not continue antibiotics to prevent infection - **this is unnecessary and contributes to the spread of antibiotic resistance**



Check wounds for infection and use standard dressings on primary wounds



Correct use of antibiotics and surgical techniques help **stop the spread of antibiotic resistance**



Preventative measures can **reduce SSIs by 39%** (as shown in a pilot study in 4 African countries)

**SSI surveillance** needs to be an integral part of programmes to prevent infections



**Team work, good communication and staff engagement** support SSI prevention



**WHO's Global Guidelines for the Prevention of Surgical Site Infections** provide recommendations for the care of patients before, during and after surgery. For more information visit [www.who.int/gpsc/en](http://www.who.int/gpsc/en)



World Health Organization