Transmission of Pathogenic Bacterial Organisms in the Anesthesia Work Area


While the transmission of bacterial organisms in the anesthesia work area is a familiar subject, this article is one of the first to objectively study and document the issue.

The authors document the relationship between a stopcock contaminated with bacteria during a surgical procedure and the development of an infection.

- 32% of cases resulted in a bacteria contaminated stopcock. Contamination occurred early and is unrelated to factors of case duration, urgency or patient physical condition.
- 25% of patients (5 of 20) with bacteria contaminated stopcocks developed nosocomial infections. 2 of the 5 patients ultimately died after prolonged stays in the Intensive Care Unit.
- Only 12% of patients (5 of 41) without bacteria contaminated stopcocks developed nosocomial infections. There were no patient deaths in this group.

Key finding of the study: Implementation of infection control measures in the anesthesia work area may help reduce the development of infections.