

PRESS RELEASE

Life-threatening sepsis

World Hand Hygiene Day focuses on the third most common cause of death in Germany

Hamburg, 2 May 2018

- In Germany, 185 people die of bloodstream infection every day
- Each infection can trigger sepsis – improved hand hygiene can prevent up to a third of all infections acquired in hospitals
- HARTMANN campaigns for infection control and better hand hygiene in German clinics

In 2018, World Hand Hygiene Day – which is held on 5 May every year – will be marked by an infection that is overlooked much too often: sepsis. Every fourth of the 280 000 patients contracting a sepsis in Germany each year dies: this equals 185 people per day. Thus, bloodstream infection is one of the leading causes of death, ranking third, even ahead of the heart attack.

The life-threatening disease is triggered by infections due to hospital pathogens. One relevant lever for preventing bloodstream infection therefore is the prevention of the underlying infection – for example by consistent hand hygiene, the most important individual measure to break the chain of infection.

(Hospital) infection out of control

Generally, every infection can trigger sepsis: the pathogens enter the blood from the original infection site and are transported to all organs via the bloodstream. Within a few hours only, the body's subsequent immune reaction can lead to long-term organ and nerve damages or even to death. The most frequent elicitors include pneumonia and urinary tract infections – infections that are also at the top of the list of nosocomial infections. According to a recent survey the number of sepsis cases increased in German clinics by an annual average of 6 % between 2007 and 2013. During the same period, the share of severe courses noticeably rose from 27 % to 41 % as well.

Precluding infection – preventing sepsis

A great many of these infections is preventable, the World Health Organization (WHO) says – for example by improved hand hygiene. Because about one third of all hospital-acquired infections, which may develop into sepsis, could be prevented by improved hand hygiene. However, in clinical routine, hand hygiene often is missed out.



Dr. Henning Mallwitz, hygiene expert and Director Research & Development at BODE Chemie GmbH, subsidiary of PAUL HARTMANN AG, emphasises two core approaches that can promote the practical implementation of hand hygiene in hospitals. “To support the already overworked employees in performing hand hygiene, it is necessary to introduce an alcohol-based, skin-friendly hand disinfectant – because a high level of acceptance is the precondition for the use,” Mallwitz explains. “Concrete assistance can additionally support the practical implementation: for example, processes that lead the employees through the activity step by step and remind of the hygienically relevant steps, such as hand disinfection.”

HARTMANN and its scientific centre of excellence BODE SCIENCE CENTER already developed optimised processes for many nursing and medical activities – for example for placing a peripheral venous catheter (PVC). A clinical study proved that such a process can improve hand hygiene by up to 45 %.

BODE SCIENCE CENTER

The Hamburg-based BODE SCIENCE CENTER – the scientific centre of excellence of PAUL HARTMANN AG, Heidenheim –has been dealing with current issues related to hygiene and infection prevention since 2011. The focus is mainly on scientifically substantiated solutions to provide better protection for patients, healthcare workers and consumers.

Media contacts:

Cristina Miranda Zerr
Head of Communication
BODE Chemie GmbH
a company of the HARTMANN GROUP
cristina.miranda-zerr@bode-chemie.de
T. +49(0)40-54006-177

Sabine Niknam
Managing Director
SCICOM GmbH
scientific communication
s.niknam@scicom-pr.de
T. +49 (0)25 32 86-05
M. +49 (0)179 50 54 657

