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## CONTENTS

## Original Articles

- 245** Effectiveness of Chlorhexidine Wipes for the Prevention of Multidrug-Resistant Bacterial Colonization and Hospital-Acquired Infections in Intensive Care Unit Patients: A Randomized Trial in Thailand  
*Adhiratha Boonyasiri, Peerapat Thaisiam, Chairat Permpikul, Tepnimitr Judaeng, Bordeesuda Suiwongsa, Napaporn Apiradeewajeset, Teerawan Fakhongphan, Sunun Suddee, Wandee Laoagtipparos and Visanu Thamlikitkul*
- 254** Preadmission Application of 2% Chlorhexidine Gluconate (CHG): Enhancing Patient Compliance While Maximizing Skin Surface Concentrations  
*Charles E. Edmiston, Candace J. Krepel, Maureen P. Spencer, Alvaro A. Ferraz, Gary R. Seabrook, Cheong J. Lee, Brian D. Lewis, Kellie R. Brown, Peter J. Rossi, Michael J. Malinowski, Sarah E. Edmiston, Edmundo M. Ferraz and David J. Leaper*
- 260** The Development of Statistical Models for Predicting Surgical Site Infections in Japan: Toward a Statistical Model-Based Standardized Infection Ratio  
*Haruhisa Fukuda and Manabu Kuroki*
- 272** Hand Hygiene, Cohorting, or Antibiotic Restriction to Control Outbreaks of Multidrug-Resistant *Enterobacteriaceae*  
*Camille Pelat, Lidia Kardaś-Słoma, Gabriel Birgand, Etienne Ruppé, Michaël Schwarzwinger, Antoine Andreumont, Jean-Christophe Lucet and Yazdan Yazdanpanah*
- 281** Hospital Readmissions in Patients With Carbapenem-Resistant *Klebsiella pneumoniae*  
*Julia A. Messina, Eric Cober, Sandra S. Richter, Federico Perez, Robert A. Salata, Robert C. Kalayjian, Richard R. Watkins, Nikole M. Scalera, Yohei Doi, Keith S. Kaye, Scott Evans, Robert A. Bonomo, Vance G. Fowler and David van Duin for the Antibacterial Resistance Leadership Group*
- 289** Outbreaks of Vancomycin-Resistant Enterococci in Hospital Settings: A Systematic Review and Calculation of the Basic Reproductive Number  
*Laetitia Satilmis, Philippe Vanhems and Thomas Bénet*
- 295** *Clostridium difficile* Infections in Veterans Health Administration Long-Term Care Facilities  
*Jeffrey S. Reeves, Martin E. Evans, Loretta A. Simbartl, Stephen M. Kralovic, Allison A. Kelly, Rajiv Jain and Gary A. Roselle*
- 301** Catheter-Related Bloodstream Infections in Patients on Emergent Hemodialysis  
*Christian A. Rojas-Moreno, Daniel Spiegel, Venkata Yalamanchili, Elizabeth Kuo, Henry Quinones, Pranavi V. Sreeramoju and James P. Luby*
- 306** An Outbreak of Severe Group A *Streptococcus* Infections Associated with Podiatric Application of a Biologic Dermal Substitute  
*Lauren A. Ibrahim, John A. Sellick, Elaine L. Watson, Lisa M. McCabe, Karen A. Schoenhals, Richard A. Martinello and Alan J. Lesse*
- 313** Current Capabilities and Capacity of Ebola Treatment Centers in the United States  
*Jocelyn J. Herstein, Paul D. Biddinger, Colleen S. Kraft, Lisa Saiman, Shawn G. Gibbs, Aurora B. Le, Philip W. Smith, Angela L. Hewlett and John J. Lowe*
- 319** Treatment for Positive Urine Cultures in Hospitalized Adults: A Survey of Prevalence and Risk Factors in 3 Medical Centers  
*Jonathan D. Grein, Katherine L. Kahn, Samantha J. Eells, Seong K. Choi, Marianne Go-Wheeler, Tanzib Hossain, Maya Y. Riva, Megan H. Nguyen, A. Rekha Murthy and Loren G. Miller*

### Review Article

- 327 Beyond Infection: Device Utilization Ratio as a Performance Measure for Urinary Catheter Harm  
*Mohamad G. Fakh, Carolyn V. Gould, Barbara W. Trautner, Jennifer Meddings, Russell N. Olmsted, Sarah L. Krein and Sanjay Saint*
- 334 *Commentary: Catheter Matters*  
*Lindsay E. Nicolle*

### Concise Communications

- 337 A Novel, Sporicidal Formulation of Ethanol for Glove Decontamination to Prevent *Clostridium difficile* Hand Contamination During Glove Removal  
*Myreen E. Tomas, Michelle M. Nerandzic, Jennifer L. Cadnum, Thriveen S. C. Mana, Annette Jencson, Venkata Sunskesula, Sirisha Kundrapu, Brigid M. Wilson and Curtis J. Donskey*
- 340 Quaternary Ammonium Disinfectant Issues Encountered in an Environmental Services Department  
*John M. Boyce, Linda Sullivan, Arica Booker and James Baker*
- 343 Antimicrobial Stewardship Barriers and Goals in Pediatric Oncology and Bone Marrow Transplantation: A Survey of Antimicrobial Stewardship Practitioners  
*Joshua Wolf, Yilun Sun, Li Tang, Jason G. Newland, Jeffrey S. Gerber, Christie J. Van Dyke, Saul R. Hymes, Diana Yu, Delia C. Carias and Penelope A. Bryant on behalf of the Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Antimicrobial Stewardship Interest Group*
- 348 A Survey of Infection Prevention and Control Practices among Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplant Centers  
*Elena Beam, Michael R. Keating and Raymund R. Razonable*
- 352 The Impact of Nighttime Intensivists on Medical Intensive Care Unit Infection-Related Indicators  
*Abhaya Trivedi, Kathleen M. McMullen, Hilary M. Babcock and Marin H. Kollef*

### Research Briefs

- 355 Healthcare Worker Perceptions of and Barriers to Universal Staphylococcal Decolonization in Elective Orthopaedic Joint Surgeries  
*Nadia Masroor, Gregory J. Golladay, Julie Williams, Alexander D. Colquhoun, Wilhelm Zuelzer, Kakotan Sanogo, Michelle Doll, Michael P. Stevens and Gonzalo Bearman*
- 357 *Clostridium difficile* Infection in Texas Hospitals, 2007-2011  
*Tiffany A. Radcliff, Andrea L. Lorden and Hongwei Zhao*
- 359 Antibiotic Prescribing for Urinary Tract Infections in the Emergency Department Based on Local Antibiotic Resistance Patterns: Implications for Antimicrobial Stewardship  
*Nathan J. Hudepohl, Cheston B. Cunha and Leonard A. Mermel*

### Letters to the Editor

- 361 *Clostridium difficile*—To Test or Not to Test? Response to Kundrapu et al  
*Anna-Rose Prior and Fidelma Fitzpatrick*
- 362 Response to Prior and Fitzpatrick  
*Sirisha Kundrapu, Venkata Sunskesula, Myreen Tomas and Curtis J. Donskey*
- 363 Challenges of Long-Term MRSA Management in a Complex Continuing Care Setting  
*Erica K. Susky and Camille Lemieux*
- 365 Resistant Superbugs: Race against Time  
*Mohit Kumar*

- 366** Encouraging Antibiotic Development and Endorsing Conservation: Tandem Approaches to Our Declining Antibiotic Reserves  
*Kevin A. Cassady, Jason G. Newland and Lisa Saiman*
- 368** Needle-Stick Injury Caused by a Patient With Severe Fever With Thrombocytopenia Syndrome in Korea  
*Se Yoon Park, Sung-Han Kim, Sun-Whan Park, Eun Byeol Wang, Won Ja Lee, Youngmee Jee and WooYoung Choi*

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## About the cover:



The cover format of each volume of *Infection Control & Hospital Epidemiology* honors one of the many professionals throughout history who recognized not only how disease might be spread but also how the principles of epidemiology could be applied to reduce healthcare-associated infections.

Florence Nightingale (1820–1910) was named after the Italian city where she was born to affluent and well-educated English landowners. As a middle-class woman in Victorian England, Florence recognized that she was destined for a life of domesticity and “trivial occupations.” Her choice of nursing, given its reputation at the time as a vocation for poor elderly spinsters, was met with significant familial opposition. During her European travels, Ms. Nightingale visited the Deaconess Mutterhaus in Kaiserswerth, Düsseldorf, one of the most forward thinking nursing training schools of the day. She returned to Düsseldorf to complete her training and then studied with the Sisters of Charity in Paris. She later assumed the role of superintendent at a hospital for invalid gentlewomen in London.

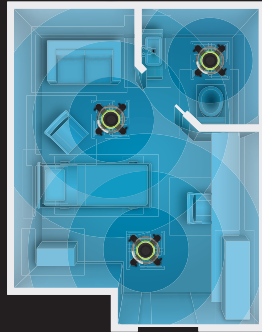
In 1854, the Minister of War invited Ms. Nightingale to oversee the introduction of nurses at British Army hospitals in Scutari, Turkey. Up to that point, 20% of men who fought in the Crimean War died, and approximately 70% of those deaths were due to infections such as typhus, cholera, typhoid, and dysentery. The germ theory of disease had not yet been formulated, but Florence Nightingale recognized that most problems were caused by “inadequate diet, dirt, and drains.” She adopted the concept of “sanitary nursing” ensuring that patient care focused on prevention of infection through adequate diet, fresh air, light, warmth, and cleanliness. She was an early advocate for hand hygiene and the need for clean water, adequate ventilation, and appropriate sewage disposal. Each night, she traveled through more than 6 km of hospital wards carrying a Turkish lamp; thus the media referred to her as “The Lady with the Lamp.” With her interventions, mortality rates declined to 2%–6%.

In response, a grateful nation raised £50,000 for the Nightingale Fund, and the first professional training school for nurses at St. Thomas’ Hospital, London, was established under her direction. Florence Nightingale was one of the first to apply statistical analysis to her observations. She made important recommendations regarding the optimal design of hospitals and patient wards, saying, “The very first requirement in a hospital is that it should do the sick no harm.” Training schools have been established worldwide based on her ideas. Florence Nightingale was the first woman to receive Britain’s highest civilian decoration, the Order of Merit. She died at the age of 90 after many years of being bed-ridden due to chronic illness, possibly brucellosis.

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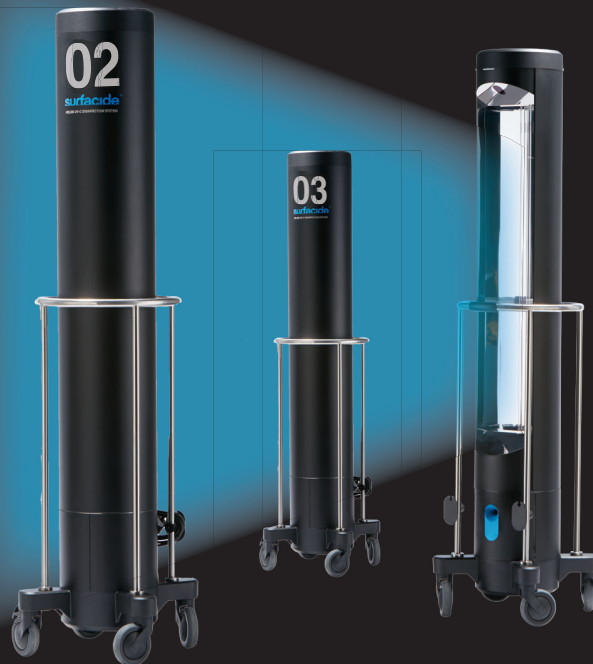


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