

100k *lives* Campaign

SOME IS NOT A NUMBER. SOON IS NOT A TIME.

What You Need to Know about Ventilator-Associated Pneumonia (VAP): *A Fact Sheet for Patients and their Family Members*

Ventilator-Associated Pneumonia (VAP) is a lung infection that can happen to patients who are on ventilators (machines to help them breathe). This infection is very serious. About 15 percent (1 or 2 out of 10) of patients on ventilators get VAP. About half (50 out of 100) the patients with VAP die from it.

Some hospital patients need help breathing, either because they have just had a major operation or because they are very ill. These patients are often placed on a ventilator, a machine that supplies regular breaths through a tube inserted in the patient's mouth, nose, or through a hole in the front of the neck. Most of these patients recover, and the ventilator can be removed. However, there are proven ways to help prevent VAP – and patients and families can help to make sure these things are done.

A bundle of 4 care steps to prevent VAP:

Doctors and nurses can help prevent VAP by using a bundle of 4 “care steps.” Hospitals find that when all 4 of these steps are done that there are almost no cases of VAP. The bundle of care steps are:

- Raising the head of the patient's bed between 30 and 40 degrees.
- Giving the patient medication to prevent stomach ulcers.
- Preventing blood clots when patients are lying very still.
- Seeing if patients can breathe on their own when waking up after surgery.

How family members can help:

Ask the nurses and doctors these questions:

- Are you going to raise the head of the bed when [patient] is on the ventilator?
- How are you going to prevent stomach ulcers?
- What will you do to prevent blood clots?
- When can [patient] try breathing on his or her own?

Learn more about ventilator-associated pneumonia as it relates to the 100,000 Lives Campaign on www.ihl.org.

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The 100,000 Lives Campaign is a national initiative of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement to engage more than 2,600 U.S. hospitals in a commitment to implement changes in care that have been proven to prevent avoidable deaths. The goal of the Campaign is to save 100,000 lives by June 2006.

<http://www.ihl.org/IHI/Programs/Campaign/Campaign.htm>

Information provided in this Fact Sheet is intended to help patients and their families in obtaining effective treatment and assisting medical professionals in the delivery of care. The IHI does not provide medical advice or medical services of any kind, however, and does not practice medicine or assist in the diagnosis, treatment, care, or prognosis of any patient. Because of rapid changes in medicine and information, the information in this Fact Sheet is not necessarily comprehensive or definitive, and all persons intending to rely on the information contained in this Fact Sheet are urged to discuss such information with their health care provider. Use of this information is at the reader's own risk.

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