

BRIEF GUIDE TO THE MAIN TYPES OF SURGICAL SITE INFECTION

Superficial Incisional Surgical Site Infection

Infection occurs within 30 days following the procedure, involving only the skin and subcutaneous tissue of the incision site and at least one of the following:



- Purulent discharge
- Pain or tenderness
- Localised swelling
- Redness or heat

Deep Incisional Surgical Site Infection

Infection occurs within 30 days following the procedure if no implant is left in place or within one year if the implant is in place. It involves deep soft tissue (fascia, muscle) of the incision site and at least one of the following:



- Spontaneous dehiscence
- Abscessation
- Pyrexia
- Localised pain or tenderness

Organ/Cavity Surgical Site Infection

Infection occurs within 30 days following the procedure if no implant is left in place or within one year if the implant is in place. It can involve any part of the anatomy (organs, cavities) other than the incision which was opened or manipulated during the procedure and at least one of the following:



- Purulent discharge from a drain that has been placed surgically
- Abscessation or other evidence of infection noted on direct examination, diagnostic imaging or exploratory laparotomy

Thank you in advance for your assistance, we greatly appreciate your help with infection surveillance. We are always happy to discuss any issues you may have regarding surgical infections.

Reference:

Horan TC, Gaynes RP, Martone WJ, Jarvis WR, Emori TG. CDC Definitions of Nosocomial Surgical Site Infections, 1992: A Modification of CDC Definitions of Surgical Wound Infections. *Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol* 1992; 13: 606–608