

Notification to patients

It has been recommended that facilities that do open-chest cardiac surgery utilizing a specific machine notify patients of the low probability of exposure to a bacteria. This recommendation went out to facilities around the world and is not specific to Hutchinson Regional Medical Center, (HRMC).

The notice was sent out from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to facilities that use the Stockert 3T device. The CDC and the FDA have concluded that there may be a risk of getting a bacterial infection caused by *Mycobacterium chimaera*, a type of bacteria known as nontuberculous mycobacterium (NTM). The federal agencies have determined the likely source to be the machine that is used during open-chest cardiac surgery. They have determined that the contamination may have occurred during the manufacturing process in Switzerland.

Hutchinson Regional Medical Center has followed all of the recommended procedures and other actions sent out since we purchased the machine in 2010, and when the notification was received in October we removed the machine from use at our facility.

We have searched for this bacteria in any of the cultures that were done in our Laboratory since 2010. We have not found any patients that had open-chest cardiac surgery or any other surgeries that had any type of infection related to this bacteria. The Federal Agencies have stated the chance of getting this bacteria is very small, at less than 1 percent.

The symptoms of an NTM infection include; night sweats, muscle aches, weight loss, fatigue and unexplained fever. This infection is slow growing and difficult to diagnose. These symptoms also are present in many other conditions not related to this bacteria.

We understand that there might be additional questions and concerns about this information. We recommend that you speak to your physician about your specific health issues and how this may apply. We have notified many physicians in the primary counties that we provide services to. Your primary physicians may not have been part of that mailing. If your physician did not get the physician mailing and would like additional information please have them call the hot line number listed below. If you would test positive for this bacteria your physician should notify the local Health Department or the Center for Disease Control.

We have established a hot line (620-513-3868) at HRMC. The hotline will be available Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm.