Wound Infections
ALERT FOR PEOPLE LIVING HOMELESS

GET CARE FOR WOUND INFECTIONS

Group A strep is a germ that is spreading in King County. It can cause “strep throat” and skin infections, and also severe infections, including “flesh-eating” bacterial infections. People living homeless and those who inject drugs are at higher risk.

If you have the following, see a doctor or healthcare provider:

- Skin or a wound that has swelling, redness or pain.
- Fever, dizziness or confusion, sometimes with a flat, red rash.

HOW IT SPREADS FROM PERSON-TO-PERSON

- Sneezing, coughing, or spraying tiny saliva droplets when talking.
- Sharing food, drinks, drugs, or personal items like forks or cups.
- Contact with infected wounds or skin sores.

HOW TO PREVENT INFECTION

- Get prompt treatment for wounds, illnesses with fever, and lice, bed bugs or itchy skin.
- Regularly check, clean, and bandage wounds until healed. Infected wounds (e.g., red, swollen, painful) should be checked by a health care provider as soon as possible.
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water (e.g., after toileting, before meals, after coughing/sneezing). Soap and water is best, but if unavailable, use hand sanitizer.
- Bathe and wash clothing as regularly as possible.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.

AVOID SHARING:

- Personal care items (bar soap, toothbrushes, razors, combs, unwashed clothing, towels, etc.)
- Food, drinks, dishes, or utensils
- Cigarettes or items used to inject, smoke, or snort drugs (needles, cookers, water, tourniquets, pipes, etc.)