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Infection Control: Why Audiologists Need to Care

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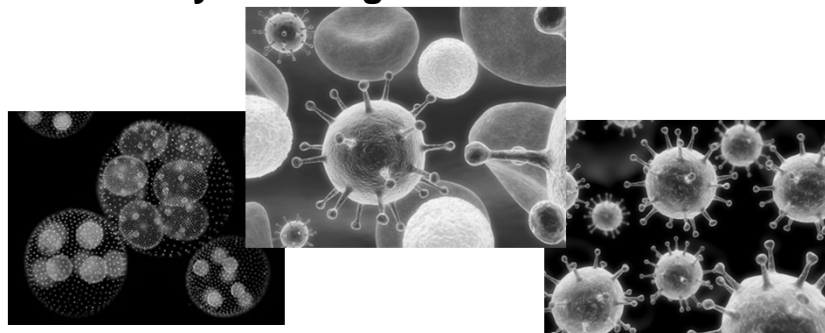
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Infection Control:

Why Audiologists Need To Care



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Vice President

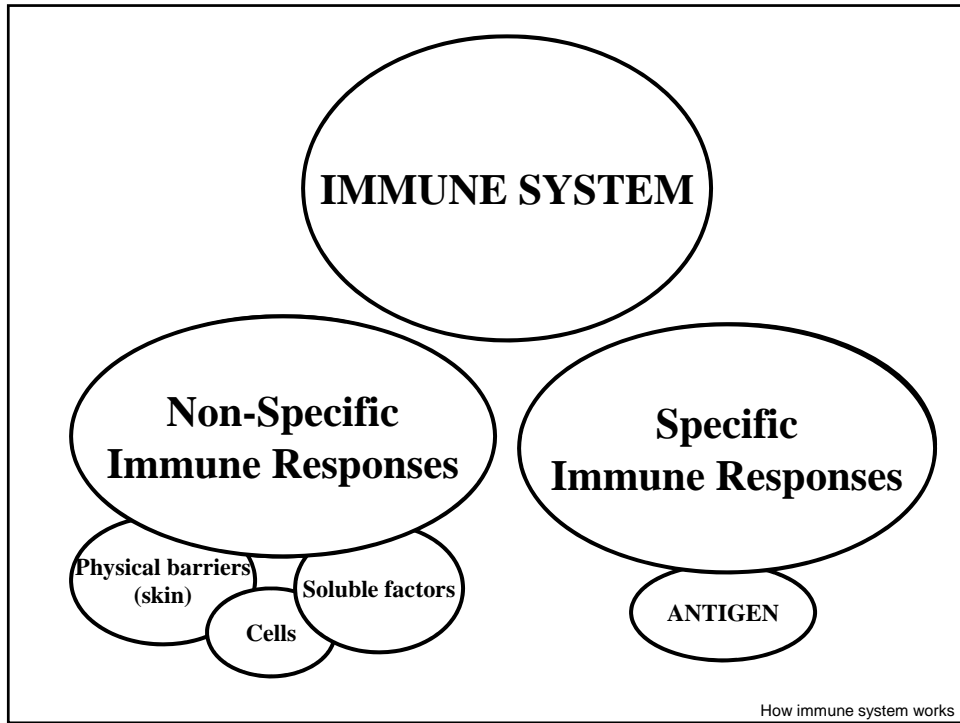
Oaktree Products, Inc.

St. Louis, MO

► **What is infection control?**

**‘....conscious management
of the clinical environment
for purposes of minimizing
or eliminating the potential
spread of disease’**

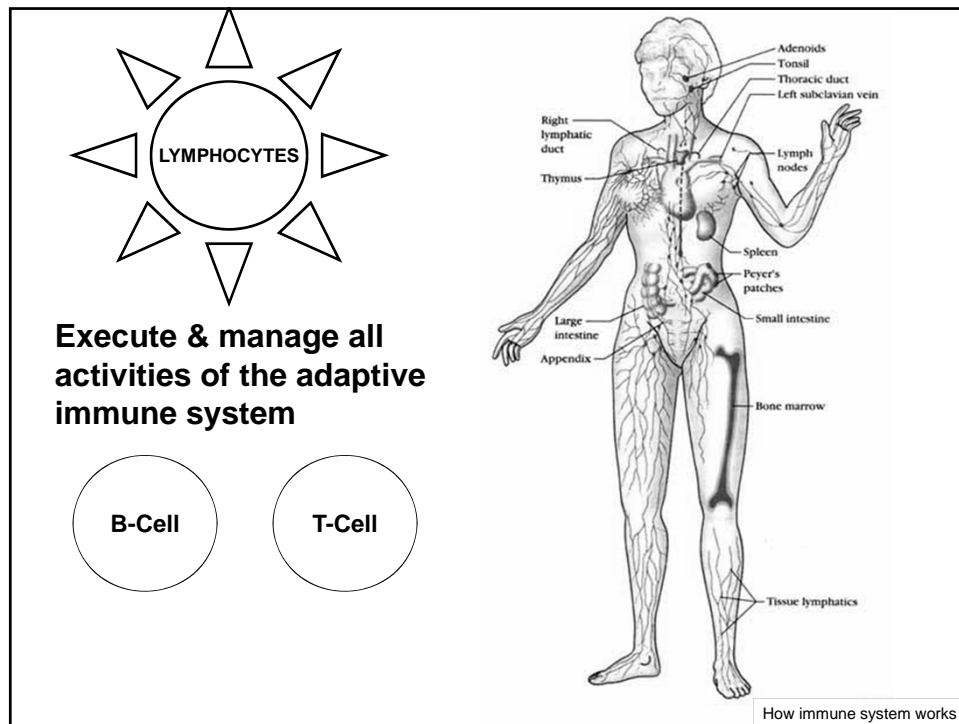
Bankaitis & Kemp, 2003, 2004



**ADAPTIVE
IMMUNE
SYSTEM**

- Bone Marrow
- Thymus
- Lymph Nodes
- Spleen, tonsils, adenoids, appendix, peyer's patches

Image from: <http://uhaweb.hartford.edu/BUGL/immune.htm#fluids> How immune system works



B-Cells

- Maturation process occurs within bone marrow
- Identify antigen
- Triggered to produce antigen-specific antibody proteins
- Antibody destroys antigen

T-Cells

- Maturation process initiated within bone marrow
- Completed in thymus
- Several categories
- Detects antigen
- Destroys antigen

Lessons Learned from HIV

- HIV = catalyst of change for infection control
- Audiologists serve HIV+ patient population
- Audiologists exposed to various microbes + other immuno-compromised patient populations

Why Should We Care?

- Federal mandate
- Contact with bodily fluids
- Multiple Contact with Multiple objects & patients
- Opportunistic Infections

What is growing on your patients' hearing aids?



A.U. Bankaitis
The Hearing Journal
June 2002, Volume
55(6)

How to Initially Prepare for Infection Control Plan Implementation

- **Assess scope of service**

Assess scope of service

- Develop Work Practice Controls
- Profession-specific procedures designed to reduce the likelihood of cross-contamination
 - Take list of services you provide
 - Create written procedure
 - Base procedure on Universal (Standard) Precautions

Standard Precautions

- Appropriate personal barriers (gloves, masks, eye protection, gowns) must be worn when performing procedures that may expose to infectious agents
- Hands must be washed before and after every patient contact and after glove removal
- “Touch” and “splash” surfaces must be pre-cleaned and disinfected
- Critical instruments must be sterilized
- Infectious waste must be disposed of appropriately

Take home messages

- Infection control requires consciously managing the clinical environment
- Important element of best practices for Audiology
- Requires preparation in the form of identifying scope of services prior to developing a written plan

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