

In regards to the LA Times article concerning Olympus Scopes:

Recent attention has been placed on infections associated with a particular endoscopic instrument use in evaluating the biliary tree called a duodenoscope. Nationwide, there have been several infections with a "superbug" known as CRE-Carbapenem Resistant Enterobacteriaceae. These germs are harbored in normal gastrointestinal tracts and can become virulent in different setting. Not all infections have been associated with GI procedures, CRE is a challenge for all specialties of medicine, including gastroenterology. CRE has been estimated to occur in less than 1 in 5000 ERCP procedures (0.02%) compared to the general ERCP infection rate of 1%. The physicians of Gastroenterology, LTD perform these highly complex procedures at Sentara Virginia Beach General Hospital (SVBGH). No reports of CRE have been found at our institution.

Spread of CRE is felt to be due to faulty or incomplete disinfection of the duodenoscope utilized in ERCP. In early 2015 when these infections were being recognized, the GI physicians and the endoscopy department at SVBGH reviewed our disinfection procedures and took the initiative to improve the reprocessing technique. Following the SGNA (Society for Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates) and FDA recommendations changes were implemented in the reprocessing of all duodenoscopes to include channel checks for protein, carbohydrates and blood. All scopes were manually cleaned following an extensive process focused at the biopsy forceps elevator and channel. High level cleaning using enzymatic agents were performed and the all scopes were washed in the Medivator washing machine using Rapicide PA for a complete 20 minute cycle. The channels were then checked and if they failed the process they were immediately re-cleaned following all of the steps. Additionally, all duodenoscopes are again re-disinfected before use for any procedure.

The Endoscopy Units at Gastroenterology, LTD and SVBGH, pride ourselves in proactively addressing these issues to minimize risk and maximize patient safety for all of our patients.