

## **Half Of Hospital Rooms Rife With Drug-resistant Bug, Study Finds**

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Nearly half of hospital rooms of patients infected with drug-resistant strains of *Acinetobacter baumannii* are contaminated with the bacteria, a small new survey shows. Surfaces such as bedrails, drawer handles and touchpads are particularly prone to harboring the germ.

That could pose big problems for hospital staff and future patients if existing cleaning practices don't get rid of one of the top 10 germs responsible for serious health care-acquired infections, said Dr. Kerri A. Thom, an infectious disease specialist at the University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore.

"Fairly frequently we find these important pathogens are inhabiting these high-touch surfaces," said Thom, noting that previous studies have detected surface contamination with bugs responsible for worrisome MRSA and *Clostridium difficile* infections.

"This does reflect a potential source of transmission of bacteria from one patient to the next."

Thom and her team analyzed rooms of 50 intensive care patients infected with multi-drug-resistant *Acinetobacter baumannii*, a strain of bacteria increasingly responsible for hard-to-treat infections in soldiers returning from combat - and in hospital critical care units.

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