

To: **Members of HAI - Advisory Committee**
From: **Alicia Cole, HAI Survivor & Committee Member**
Date: November 20, 2008
RE: As the committee addresses language and categories of reportable infections, please consider the following.

C-sections and Hysterectomies

In 2006 the population of California was 36,457,549. 50% of that is Female.

Surgical site infections are a common complication of care, occurring in up to **20%** of patients undergoing **intra-abdominal procedures**.

Studies following patients into the **post-discharge period** have reported even **higher rates** of postoperative infection. These complications increase morbidity for patients and consume substantial additional resources.

Cesarean section is the most common major surgery in this country, nearly 3 in 10 U.S. mothers are giving birth by Caesarean section — a record number.

Infections have been reported in about **2 out of 20** cesarean sections. The most common sites are inside the uterus, urinary tract, in the incision, and in the area around the uterus in the abdomen.

In 2006, the Percentage of all live births delivered by C-section in the USA was **31.1%**

The World Health Organization (WHO) states that no region in the world is justified in having a cesarean rate greater than 10 to 15 percent.

A report by The Public Health Citizen's Research Group indicated that 967,000 cesareans were performed in the US in 1989. They estimated that cesareans performed in 1987 resulted in **25,000 serious infections**, 1.1 million extra hospital days and a cost of over \$1 billion. (No study of current infection rates could be found.)

Hysterectomy in the United States, 2000–2004

Approximately **600,000** hysterectomies are performed each year in the United States.

Hysterectomy is the **second most frequent major surgical procedure** among reproductive-aged women.

From 2000 through 2004, an estimated **3.1 million** U.S. women had a hysterectomy.

Sources: National Center for Health Statistics
ICEA Cesarean Options committee
CDC

Public Stories

I had a c-section, and developed infection 2 days after being released from the hospital (a 2 day hospital stay). The incision was reopened, packed, and I was given shots of antibiotics everyday for 8 days. The packing was changed every other day, and they stopped packing it this week. It is now sore and red again, and is clearly infected (the infection never went away, just got somewhat better). The doctor keeps telling me that the hard pockets I'm feeling are "just the way that fat heals". Last week he pulls out 6 tubes of blood/fluid from a hematoma. That area felt that same way before he took the fluid out. **How do you get these doctors to listen to you?** I was told that the opening in the incision would close in its own 48 hours

after the packing was removed, and it's not closing at all (6 days later). **Also, I hemorrhaged yesterday all day, and was just told to put my feet up. Any suggestions?**

I also had a horrible infection in my c-section incision, and the doctor removed the staples and then stuck her hand inside of my cut and started feeling around. It hurt horribly and I was put on a broad-spectrum of antibiotics and remained in the hospital for a total of 8 days. They never reclosed my incision and my incision had to be packed twice a day with sterile water and gauze and **took between 2 and 3 months to heal on its own.** I still am unsure of why they reopened it, but I do know that lime green drainage is what I had was green initially. I would maybe try to call the nurse line at the hospital and tell her your situation and see what she advises you to do. I wish I could help you more, keep us updated as to what comes out of this. Marie P.

I had my daughter April 3rd 2007, I was released from the hospital on April 6th and by 9:00 that night I was running a 101 temp. I called the Dr on call and they called me in Amoxicillin. I took that until Sunday the 8th I ended up BACK at the ER because my fever was 104 and I could barely walk.

The ER diagnosed me with Milk Fever and Compaction. The following Tuesday I woke up around 2 in the morning and I noticed my incision was leaking and it had a HORRIBLE smell. I called the dr and he said to come in first thing in the morning. About 30 mins later **my incision had completely opened and was pouring blood and the smell was indescribable.**

The dr I had called told me it was normal and to keep a towel around it... by then I was already on my way to the ER AGAIN and by the time we got there I had soaked a beach towel with blood.

I ended up with **would care coming in and telling my family if I would have waited 24 more hours the infection would have killed me.** This ALL happening with a newborn baby at home.

I was in the hospital for another week, and discharged with home health care every day until it was healed. In the mean time of this, on May 6th I woke up with Bells Palsy, and was told that it was caused from difficult delivery. I had these issues until July 07. Mandi

I just gave birth 6 weeks ago and my incision became infected before I left the hospital. I reported foul odor, extreme pain and ample drainage. I was told that the drainage and pain were normal and that the odor was from me having extra skin lying over the incision and sweating. {This is not my first c section} **Despite of my complaints I was given a stronger painkiller and released.** The very next day I was in the doctor's office and my incision was opened and very infected. I was sent home and I had a nurse that came over to the house 2x a day to pack my wound and I was given an oral antibiotic. The very next night I went to the ER running a temp of 102.5. Finally, they believed how sick I was and I was admitted in the hospital for 48 hrs of IV antibiotics. After, I was released I continued to have the nurses come over to pack my wound until 2wks ago {4wks pp}. I have still been experiencing pain and **I am now having a lime green drainage, when I brought this to the same doctors attention he said this was normal and the green drainage is just the blood billirubeing.** Please, tell me someone else has heard of this. Right now my incision is still open and I'm having a hard time finding a doctor that will work with me on this doctor's work. If there is anyone out there who can give me some advice? Please help. Banita