

Joint Cardiac and Thoracic Surgery Society Statement on Mycobacterium Chimaera Infections Related to Heater-Cooler Devices Used in Cardiac Surgery

The worldwide cardiothoracic surgery community is aware of the public health issue with recent heater-cooler infection findings traced to a manufacturing facility and has actively engaged in understanding the cause and developing measures to lower the risk and occurrences of these infections. To date, *Mycobacterium chimaera* infections related to heater-cooler devices have been reported in Europe and North America (i.e., Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada).

Cardiac and thoracic surgery societies throughout the world are united in efforts to share information, including [practices, protocols, and mitigation strategies](#) that have been deployed and utilized by our members, their institutions, and other health care experts, especially infectious disease experts. Cardiothoracic surgeons remain committed to offering a safe environment for patients.

In issuing this statement, our goals are to 1) communicate with the global cardiothoracic surgery community and its patients regarding protocols that have been developed, and 2) offer information from credible sources.

A US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC Health Advisory](#)) and a US Food and Drug Administration [Safety Communication](#) provide detailed approaches for health care providers, hospitals, health departments, and patients. The undersigned societies support the CDC's advice that patients who have undergone cardiac surgery and are at risk of *M. chimaera* infection should be informed about the infection, provided a list of possible symptoms, and urged to seek early medical advice should these symptoms develop. In addition, we suggest that you review your consent processes for patients who are about to undergo cardiac surgery in order to help ensure that these kinds of potential risks are covered.

You can access more heater-cooler infection information at www.sts.org/news/infections-related-heater-cooler-devices. You also may want to view the 1-hour CDC webinar "[Invasive NTM Infections and Heater-Cooler Units](#)."

At the upcoming [STS Annual Meeting](#) in Houston (January 21-25, 2017), a special symposium will be offered on the heater-cooler situation. This symposium will include presentation of data, reflect policy from various constituents, and offer a panel discussion of clinical implications featuring cardiothoracic surgeons and infectious disease experts. More details will be available as they develop.

Sincerely,

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