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HOSPITAL GOWNS GO HIGH-TECH AT HARTFORD HOSPITAL

(Hartford, Conn.) – Hartford Hospital is introducing a new, high-tech patient gown that may make surgeries safer. The single-use Bair Paws Flex gown can be temperature-controlled, to provide comfort and clinical benefits to patients. Hartford Hospital is the first hospital in the Hartford region to offer this technology.

The Bair Paws Flex gown is made from soft, thick material and connects to a warming unit through a small hose. The warming unit blows warm air into the gown through specialized air channels with tiny perforations. Using a handheld controller, patients can adjust the temperature either warmer or cooler, depending on their personal preference.

“In the time period just before surgery, it is common for patients to experience anxiety and feeling cold can exacerbate those feelings,” said Dr. Jordan L. Blinder, Anesthesiologist at Hartford Hospital. “Giving patients control over their temperature can help provide them with a better sense of comfort as they await their procedures.”

The adjustable warmth not only provides comfort to patients; it offers clinical benefits as well – including the prevention of unintended hypothermia. In the operating room, it provides physicians with multiple options to warm patients during surgery, including upper body blanket arm extensions, a head drape and surgical tape strip. After the procedure is over, the garment returns to a standard warming gown for post-operative use.

“Patient safety and quality of care are of the utmost importance at Hartford Hospital,” said Dr. Jamie M. Roche, Vice President of Patient Safety and Quality at Hartford Hospital. “Using this warming gown during particular procedures can actually result in better outcomes for patients, by preventing certain complications.”

Inadvertent perioperative hypothermia has been called the most frequent, preventable complication of surgery\(^1\) and is associated with an increased rate of wound infection (SSIs)\(^2\), increased length of hospital stay\(^3\) and higher mortality rates.\(^4\)

One of the greatest causes of surgical hypothermia is the effect of anesthesia itself. Anesthesia causes blood vessels to dilate, allowing the warmer blood from the body’s core to mix with the blood from the cooler periphery. As the blood circulates, it cools until returning back to the heart where it causes a drop in core temperature.

Studies have shown core hypothermia can develop rapidly in the hour immediately following the induction of anesthesia. Prewarming increases the temperature of peripheral tissues and limits the blood’s rate of cooling as it circulates. This allows the blood to return to the core at a higher temperature.

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About Hartford Hospital
Hartford Hospital is an 867-bed regional referral center that provides high-quality care in all clinical disciplines. Among its divisions is The Institute of Living, a 114-bed mental health facility with a national and international reputation of excellence. Jefferson House, a 104-bed long-term care facility, is also a special division of Hartford Hospital. The hospital’s major centers of clinical excellence include cardiology, oncology, emergency services and trauma, mental health, women’s health, orthopedics, bloodless surgery and advanced organ transplantation. Hartford Hospital owns and operates the state’s only air ambulance system, LIFE STAR.

Pictured above: The Bair Paws Flex gown, which can warm patients before, during and after surgery. The gown is now used at Hartford Hospital, the first health care provider in the Hartford region to offer this technology.

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References

