



Hospitals and airconditioning

Why do hospitals need airconditioning?

Where airconditioning is essential

Apart from the obvious reason of course, of providing a comfortable environment to patients, doctors, employees and visitors, **airconditioning is a facility that modern hospitals provide to patients for therapy, in some instances even as major therapy.**

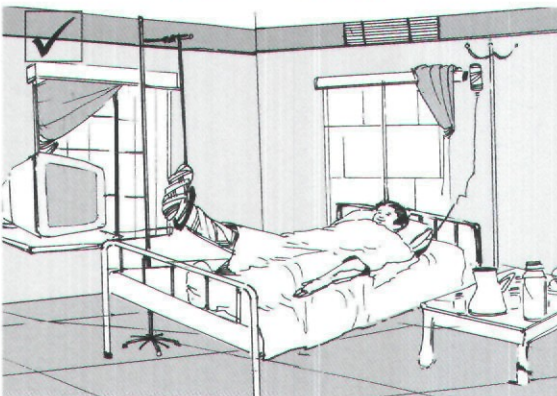
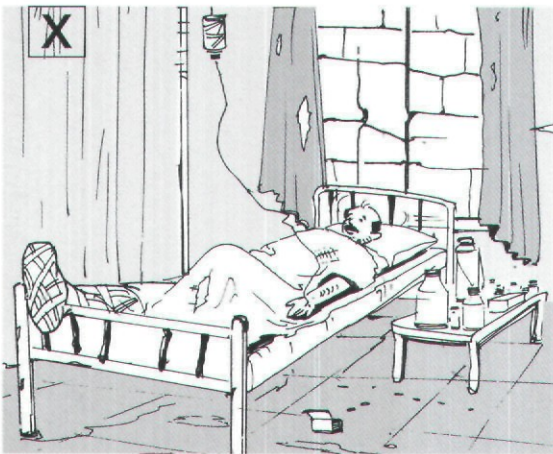
Studies show that patients in controlled environments generally show more rapid physical improvement than do those in uncontrolled environments. **Cardiac patients** for instance, may be unable to maintain the circulation necessary to ensure normal heat loss. Therefore, airconditioning cardiac wards and rooms of cardiac patients, particularly those with congestive heart failure, is necessary and considered therapeutic. Individuals with **head injuries**, those subjected to **brain operations**, and those with barbiturate (a sedative or pain killer) poisoning may have **hyperthermia** (high fever), especially in a hot environment, due to a disturbance in the heat regulatory centre of the brain. Obviously an important factor in recovery is an environment in which the patient can lose heat by radiation and evaporation – in other words – an airconditioned room.

Burn patients too need a hot environment and high relative humidity. A ward for severe burn victims should have temperature controls that permit adjusting the room temperature upto 32°C and relative humidity upto 95%.



Several **specific areas** of modern hospitals also demand airconditioned environs. For example, airconditioning is generally recognised as essential in the **operating theatre suite**. Airconditioning in this context means the ability to control the temperature both below and above the ambient temperature and also to control the humidity and sterile filtration. In other departments too, such as **intensive care**, delivery room, recovery room, radiology (X-ray), CAT, MRI and nuclear medicine, airconditioning is essential, given the hot, humid climate prevailing in most parts of the country.

Wards of course may or may not be airconditioned, with the non-airconditioned wards providing more economical stay at the hospital.



The psychological aspects

Hospitals these days are undergoing a complete metamorphosis to cater to the psychological well-being of patients and their families.

No more do hospitals like to be seen as they used to be: as places of pain and medicine, of surgery and death, of stark walls and solemn faces, smelling of anaesthetic and worse.

Instead **hospitals prefer to present a positive picture** – of health and happiness, of comfort and care, of brightness and cheer, of clean air that smells fresher than you could have smelt anywhere else in the city!



Certainly, there is no taking away the fact that hospitals are indeed associated with the grimmer facets of life, but a little thought can go a long way in letting patients and relatives have a relatively peaceful and comfortable stay at the hospital. Cheerful paint and décor, helpful assistants, room service, telephone and TV in each room – no, we are not talking of five-star hotels here – are rapidly becoming commonplace in well-designed hospitals.

Airconditioning is one such ‘essential’ in making life in a hospital livable and comfortable.

The positive feel generated by such facilities in hospitals goes beyond just satisfying whims or providing luxuries... it helps in faster healing, healthier inmates and happier clients.

Hospitals, therefore, are almost invariably airconditioned these days.

Airconditioning a hospital, however, is not a simple task. This is because different parts of the hospital require different types of airconditioning. A quick study of the insides of a typical hospital will tell us why.