
ANNEX 1 Standard Precautions for Hospital Infection Control¹³

Standard Precautions aim to reduce the risk of disease transmission in the health care setting, even when the source of infection is not known. Standard Precautions are designed for use with all patients who present in the health care setting and apply to:

- Blood and most body fluids whether or not they contain blood
- Broken skin
- Mucous membranes.

To reduce the risk of disease transmission in the health care setting, use the following Standard Precautions.

1. Wash hands immediately with soap and water before and after examining patients and after any contact with blood, body fluids and contaminated items — whether or not gloves were worn. Soaps containing an antimicrobial agent are recommended.
2. Wear clean, ordinary thin gloves anytime there is contact with blood, body fluids, mucous membrane, and broken skin. Change gloves between tasks or procedures on the same patient. Before going to another patient, remove gloves promptly and wash hands immediately, and then put on new gloves.
3. Wear a mask, protective eyewear and gown during any patient-care activity when splashes or sprays of body fluids are likely. Remove the soiled gown as soon as possible and wash hands.
4. Handle needles and other sharp instruments safely. Do not recap needles. Make sure contaminated equipment is not reused with another patient until it has been cleaned, disinfected, and sterilized properly. Dispose of non-reusable needles, syringes, and other sharp patient-care instruments in puncture-resistant containers.
5. Routinely clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces including beds, bed rails, patient examination tables and bedside tables.
6. Clean and disinfect soiled linens and launder them safely. Avoid direct contact with items soiled with blood and body fluids.

13 Adapted from Garner JS, Hospital Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee. *Guideline for Isolation Precautions In Hospitals*, January 1996. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Public Health Service, US Department of Health and Human Services, Atlanta, Georgia.

7. Place a patient whose blood or body fluids are likely to contaminate surfaces or other patients in an isolation room or area.
8. Minimize the use of invasive procedures to avoid the potential for injury and accidental exposure. Use oral rather than injectable medications whenever possible.

When a specific diagnosis is made, find out how the disease is transmitted. Use precautions according to the transmission risk.

- *If airborne transmission:*
 1. Place the patient in an isolation room that is not air-conditioned or where air is not circulated to the rest of the health facility. Make sure the room has a door that can be closed.
 2. Wear a HEPA or other biosafety mask when working with the patient and in the patient's room.
 3. Limit movement of the patient from the room to other areas. Place a surgical mask on the patient who must be moved.
- *If droplet transmission:*
 1. Place the patient in an isolation room.
 2. Wear a HEPA or other biosafety mask when working with the patient.
 3. Limit movement of the patient from the room to other areas. If patient must be moved, place a surgical mask on the patient.
- *If contact transmission:*
 1. Place the patient in an isolation room and limit access.
 2. Wear gloves during contact with patient and with infectious body fluids or contaminated items. Reinforce handwashing throughout the health facility.
 3. Wear two layers of protective clothing.
 4. Limit movement of the patient from the isolation room to other areas.
 5. Avoid sharing equipment between patients. Designate equipment for each patient, if supplies allow. If sharing equipment is unavoidable, clean and disinfect it before use with the next patient.