

Transmission-based precautions

Transmission based precautions are extra steps to follow for illnesses that are caused by certain germs.

Transmission-based precautions are followed in addition to standard precautions. Some infections require more than one type of transmission-based precautions.

Follow transmission-based precautions when an illness is first suspected. Stop following these precautions only when that illness has been treated or ruled out and the room has been cleaned.

Patients should stay in their rooms as much as possible while these precautions are in place. They may need to wear a mask or cover infected areas of the body when they leave their room.

Cleaning and disinfecting the environment should be priority, especially when the environment is shared with roommates or family.

Please follow the agency policy and the nurse's guidance regarding when to use transmission based precautions.

Airborne Precautions

Airborne precautions may be needed for germs that are so small they can float in the air and travel long distances.

Airborne precautions help keep staff, visitors, and other people from breathing in these germs and getting sick. Germs that warrant airborne precautions include chickenpox, measles, and tuberculosis (TB) bacteria infecting the lungs or larynx. People who have these germs should be in a private room with the door closed.

Anyone who goes into the room should put on a well-fitted respirator mask (N95 or higher) before they enter. If the person needs to exit the room (should be limited) they should wear a mask and follow respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette.

Please follow the agency policy and the nurse's guidance regarding when to use airborne precautions.

Contact precautions

Contact precautions help keep staff and visitors from spreading the germs after touching a person or an object the person has touched. Some of the germs that contact precautions protect from are C difficile and norovirus. These germs can cause serious infection on the intestines.

Anyone entering the room who may touch the person or objects in the room should wear a gown and gloves.

Limit movement of the person outside of the room. If the person needs to exit the room cover infected areas of the body. Use dedicated care equipment (blood pressure cuff) that won't be shared. Prioritize cleaning and disinfection of the environment.

Droplet precautions

Droplet precautions are used to prevent contact with mucus and other secretions from the nose and sinuses, throat, airways, and lungs.

When a person talks, sneezes, or coughs, droplets that contain germs can travel about 3 feet. Illnesses that require droplet precautions include influenza, pertussis (whooping cough), mumps, and other respiratory illness, such as those caused by coronavirus infections.

Anyone who goes into the room should wear a surgical mask. If the person must exit their room they should wear a mask and follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.