# Routine Practices

Routine Practices help prevent the spread of infections. These practices apply when interacting with patients[1] whether in facilities or community settings. Use Routine Practices for every patient, every time, regardless of their diagnosis or infectious status.






## Hand Hygiene is the single most important step in preventing infections

- Perform hand hygiene by using alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) or soap and water.
- Use ABHR for hand hygiene unless hands are visibly soiled.
- Use plain soap and water when:
  - hands are visibly soiled;
  - caring for patients with diarrhea and/or vomiting.
- Keep fingernails natural, clean, healthy and short. Depending on where you work, there may be restrictions on artificial nails or jewelry. Check the Hand Hygiene Policy for more information.
- Use only approved soap, and hand lotion.
- Follow the steps for performing hand hygiene found in the Hand Hygiene Procedure.
- Perform Hand Hygiene:
  - before contact with a patient or patient's environment;
  - before a clean or aseptic procedure;
  - after exposure or risk of exposure to blood or body fluids;
  - after contact with a patient or patient's environment.
- Educate patients and visitors about how and when to use hand hygiene products.



## Respiratory Hygiene: Cover Your Cough, Clean Your Hands

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Use the tissue once then dispose of it immediately, and perform hand hygiene.
- If tissues are not readily available, cough or sneeze into your upper arm or elbow.



## Infection Control Risk Assessment (ICRA)

Before providing care to any patient, assess the risk of spreading infection:

- Note any possible contact you may have with blood or body fluids (e.g. coughing, bleeding, runny nose, or soiled clothing, equipment or environment);
- Put on appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) before providing care.



## Personal Protective Equipment: <u>Gloves</u>

- Wear non-sterile gloves:
  - to help protect your hands from contact with blood, body fluids, excretions, secretions, mucous membranes or non-intact skin of patients;
  - to handle dirty or potentially contaminated items;
  - to protect your hands if you have non-intact skin (e.g. open cuts, lesions or rashes).
- Perform hand hygiene before accessing and putting on and immediately after taking them off.
- Gloves are single use. Use only once, then dispose of them immediately after use.
- Change gloves between care activities for the same patient (e.g., when moving from a contaminatedbody site to a clean body site).
- Never wear gloves outside a patient room or bed space unless transporting contaminated items or when cleaning spills of blood or body fluids.
- Remove damaged gloves and perform hand hygiene.
- Never wash gloves or use ABHR while wearing gloves.
- Sterile gloves are for sterile procedures.

Refer to the Donning and Doffing PPE posters for details on careful removal and disposal of gloves.

[1] Patients are all persons who receive or have requested health care or services. The terms "client" or "resident" may also be used, depending on the health care setting.

## Personal Protective Equipment: Gowns





- Wear a gown to protect exposed skin and clothing during activities likely to cause:
  - splashes of fluids;
  - contact with blood or body fluids (e.g., wound drainage).
- Perform hand hygiene before accessing and putting on and immediately after taking off a gown.
- Remember to fasten the tie strings at the neck and the waist.
- Make sure the sleeves cover your wrists.
- Do not use gowns as housecoats or warm-up jackets.
- Do not wear gowns outside patient rooms/bed spaces unless transporting contaminated items.
- Remove soiled gown as soon as possible.
- Do not reuse gowns.
- After removing gown:
  - place in waste container if disposable;
  - place in linen bag if reusable; and
  - perform hand hygiene.

Refer to the Donning and Doffing PPE posters for details on careful removal and disposal of gowns.

## Personal Protective Equipment: Masks and Eye Protection





- If you need a mask, you also need eye protection (e.g., goggles, face shields, visors attached tomasks).
- Wear a mask and eye protection to protect your mouth, nose and eyes during activities likely to cause splashes.
- Perform hand hygiene before accessing and putting on and immediately after taking off mask and eye protection.
- Proper wearing of a mask includes:
  - ensuring a snug fit over the nose and under the chin;
  - molding the metal bar over the nose;
  - wearing the mask with the moisture-absorbing side closest to the face;
  - changing the mask when it is moist;
  - careful removal after use, touching only the elastic or ties;
  - not wearing masks around the neck.
- Prescription glasses do not meet Workplace Health and Safety Regulations for eye protection.
- Clean and disinfect re-useable eye protection after each use.
- Discard single-use masks and eye protection in waste container.

Refer to the Donning and Doffing PPE posters for details on careful removal and disposal of masksand eye protection.

## Handling Patient Care Items and Equipment






- Discard items labeled as single use after use on one patient.
- Clean/disinfect reusable equipment after use, before use on another patient.
- Bring minimal supplies into patient rooms, tub rooms, and treatment rooms.
- Do not share personal items (e.g., soaps, lotions, razors) between patients.
- Use gloves when handling soiled items, equipment, linens (appropriate PPE may also include a gown).
- Handle soiled or used linens with minimal agitation and place directly in linen bag without sorting. Do not overfill bags. Double bag only if leaking.
- After patients are discharged, discard single-use supplies that remain and launder unused linens.
- Used meal trays and beverage dishes do not require special handling. Place on the dietary cart or in an area designated for used dishes. Disposable dishes and utensils are not required.

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## Environmental Cleaning

- Clean patient care areas on a regularly scheduled basis and after patient discharge.
- Use approved products and procedures.

Refer to Environmental Services cleaning schedules and practices.



## Patient Ambulation Outside Room, Bed space or Transfer

Before patients leave their room, educate or assist them to:

- perform hand hygiene;
- practice respiratory hygiene if coughing or sneezing;
- put on clean clothing or hospital gown/housecoat;
- ensure dressings and incontinence products contain body fluids or drainage.

Transport Staff should assess the risk of spreading infection and choose appropriate personal protective equipment to wear.




## Visitors

Encourage visitors to:

- perform hand hygiene on entry into the facility;
- practice respiratory hygiene while visiting;
- reschedule visits when feeling unwell.







## Waste and Sharps Handling

- Wear gloves to remove waste from patient rooms, treatment rooms or if the outside of the bag is soiled.
- Avoid contact with body.
- Remove gloves and perform hand hygiene.

- Remember: New Needle, New Syringe, Every Time!
- Dispose of sharps immediately after use in a puncture-proof, biohazard container.

- Do not overfill waste or sharps container.

Follow facility waste management sorting and disposal guidelines.

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