

**Summary of the Guidelines for Isolation Precautions in Hospitals: HICPAC Recommendations for Isolation Precautions in Hospitals** (Reference 15: *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology* 1996;17(1):53-80)

**Standard Precautions**

**Standard Precautions** are designed to incorporate the protection against blood-borne pathogens achieved by **Universal Precautions** and the protection against other pathogens achieved by **Body Substance Isolation**. Standard Precautions are to be used on **ALL** patients, regardless of their diagnosis or presumed infectious status, when coming into contact (or risk of contact) with any of the following: (1) **blood**, (2) **all body fluids, secretions and excretions except sweat**, (3) **non-intact skin**, or (4) **mucous membranes**.

Standard Precautions consist of the following nine components:

- (1) Routine hand washing
- (2) Consistent and correct glove use (i.e., glove changing with hand washing between patients)
- (3) Appropriate use of masks, eye protection, and face shields
- (4) Appropriate use of gowns (when necessary)
- (5) Routine cleaning or disposal of patient care equipment
- (6) Regular cleaning of all environmental surfaces
- (7) Appropriate handling of contaminated linen
- (8) Strict adherence to occupational safety requirements
- (9) Effective management of patients with poor hygienic practices



**Transmission-based Precautions Summary**

Transmission-based precautions consist of **additional** measures designed to be used with Standard Precautions to further reduce the risk of disease transmission. Transmission-based precautions are divided into the three categories listed below. Specific use of a category of transmission-based precautions is based upon the disease(s) of the patient. Example diseases are listed below each category; **for a complete list of diseases, refer to *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology* 1996;17(1):53-80, Appendix A.**



**Airborne Precautions**

- (1) Place patient in private room or cohort.
- (2) Use respiratory protection when appropriate.
- (3) Limit patient transport within the facility.
- (4) Use additional precautions with tuberculosis.\*

Example Disease:  
TB-pulmonary or laryngeal  
Measles  
Chickenpox



**Droplet Precautions**

- (1) Place patient in a private room or cohort; when not possible, maximize distance between patients.
- (2) Wear mask when working closely with the patient.
- (3) Limit patient transport within the facility.

Example Diseases:  
*H. influenza* meningitis  
*N. meningitidis* meningitis  
*S. pneumoniae* pneumonia  
Diphtheria  
Pertussis  
Influenza



**Contact Precautions**

- (1) Place patient in a private room or cohort; when not possible, consult the infection control practitioner (ICP).
- (2) Wear gloves upon entrance to room and at all times.
- (3) Wash hands with antimicrobial soap upon leaving the room taking care not to touch environmental surfaces.
- (4) Wear a gown when entering the room if contamination is at all possible.
- (5) Limit patient transport within the facility.
- (6) Dedicate the use of personal, non-critical medical equipment to a single patient.
- (7) Use additional precautions for preventing the spread of vancomycin resistance.\*\*

Example Diseases:  
MRSA/VRE infection or colonization\*\*  
*C. difficile* with diarrhea  
Shigellosis if diapered or incontinent  
Scabies

\*CDC. Guidelines for preventing the spread of tuberculosis in health care facilities. *MMWR*. 1994;43(RR-13):1-132.

\*\*HICPAC. Recommendations for preventing the spread of vancomycin resistance. *AJIC*. 1995;16:105-11