

## Infection Control: Airborne Precautions

### Maintaining Airborne Precautions

Airborne precautions are used for a person known or suspected to be infected with microorganisms that are transmitted during breathing, coughing, sneezing, talking, or procedures involving the respiratory tract, like suctioning.

Diseases that require these precautions include:

- Tuberculosis
- Measles
- Chickenpox
- Shingles
- Severe acute respiratory syndrome or SARS

Required PPE includes:

- A N-95 or higher respirator

**PPE** that may be required includes:

- Gloves
- Gown
- Goggles or face shield

**When using PPE:**

- Perform hand hygiene.
- Before entering the care area, apply the respirator and other needed PPE.
- Apply PPE in the following order – gown, respirator, goggles or face shield, then gloves. The respirator should fit your face snugly, cover the nose and mouth, and have been fit tested according to your organization's policy. Ensure your gloves cover the cuffs of the gown.
- Before leaving the care area, remove your contaminated gloves by grabbing the outside of one glove with your other gloved hand. Remove the glove and hold it in your gloved hand. Slide the fingers of your ungloved hand underneath the cuff of the other glove, peel it from your hand over the first glove, and then discard both.
- Remove your goggles or face shield by holding the earpieces and pulling away from your face, then discard. Do not touch the outside surface as this area is contaminated.
- Remove your gown by unfastening the neck ties first, then the back ties, pulling the gown away from your neck and shoulders and being careful to touch the inside of the gown only. Turn the gown inside out as you remove it, roll it into a ball, and discard.
- Leave the care area and close the door.
- Remove the bottom elastic strap of the respirator, then the top strap and pull the respirator away from your face. Do not touch the outside surface. Discard the mask.
- Perform hand hygiene.

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## Transportation

- Transport should only be for medical necessity.
- Have the individual wear a mask, follow respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette guidelines, and avoid close contact with others.
- Remove and dispose of contaminated PPE and wash hands prior to transport.
- Don clean PPE to handle the person at the destination.

## Equipment and Instruments

- Use disposable or single-person non-critical equipment.
- Limit non-disposable equipment entering or leaving the care area.
- Place contaminated reusable items in a plastic bag for transport before cleaning.

## Environmental Precautions

If the individual is in a healthcare facility:

- Provide a private airborne infection isolation room (AIIR) with a dedicated isolation entrance.

If an AIIR is unavailable:

- Have the individual wear a mask.
- Place the person in a private room and close the door.
- Limit visitors and prohibit entrance by anyone not wearing the appropriate PPE.
- Plan for the person's transfer to a facility with an AIIR.
- Once the person leaves the room, keep it closed and vacant according to policy.

## Course Contributor

Jennifer W. Burks, R.N., M.S.N. earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from The University of Virginia in 1993, and her Master of Science in Nursing from The University of North Carolina, Greensboro in 1996. She has over 20 years of clinical and teaching experience, and her areas of expertise are critical care and home health. Her professional practice in education is guided by a philosophy borrowed from Florence Nightingale's Notes on Nursing, "I do not pretend to teach her how, I ask her to teach herself, and for this purpose, I venture to give her some hints."

## Resources

Siegel, J.D., Rhinehart, E., Jackson, M., Chiarello, L., & the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee. (2007). 2007 guideline for isolation precautions: Preventing transmission of infectious agents in healthcare settings. Retrieved on May 9, 2016 from <http://www.cdc.gov/hicpac/pdf/isolation/Isolation2007.pdf>