

# Airborne and Contact Precautions Fact Sheet

## What are Airborne Precautions?

Germs can be in small airborne particles that remain suspended in the air for long periods of time and are carried by air currents. People may breathe the germs in if they are in the same room as the client or even if they are some distance away. This is called airborne transmission.

Airborne Precautions help stop the spread of germs carried by airborne transmission.

## What are Contact Precautions?

Germs can be spread directly by physical contact after touching a person, such as shaking hands, or indirectly after touching items in a room, such as clothing or equipment. This is called contact transmission.

Contact Precautions help stop the spread of germs from one person to another by direct or indirect contact.

## What procedures are used for Airborne & Contact Precautions?

- Within a hospital setting, the client will be given a private room.
- The door will be kept closed at all times, whether the client is in the room or not
- A sign will be placed on the door to let everyone know the special precautions required
- Staff may wear special masks called respirators and they will wear gloves and long-sleeved gowns while in the room or home
- The client should be out of the room or home for medically essential purposes only
- Before entering or leaving the room or home, all staff, clients and visitors should perform hand hygiene using hand sanitizer or using soap and water (if hands are visibly dirty)



## **What can clients do to help?**

- When in a health care facility, keep the door closed at all times whether in the room or not
- Stay in the room unless staff has approved leaving the room. If leaving the room, follow these directions:
  - ◆ Put on a mask before leaving the room or home and keep it on at all times
- Cover the nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and throw the tissue away in a wastebasket
- Perform hand hygiene using hand sanitizer or use soap and water (if hands are visibly dirty)
  - ◆ Before leaving the room or home
  - ◆ After blowing nose, coughing or sneezing coughing
  - ◆ After going to the bathroom
  - ◆ Before and after eating

## **What can visitors do to help?**

- When visiting a health care facility, read the sign on the door and speak to staff before entering the room. Staff will tell visitors if respirators, gloves and gowns are necessary while in the room.
- Perform hand hygiene using hand sanitizer or use soap and water (if hands are visibly dirty):
  - ◆ When entering or leaving the room or home
  - ◆ Before putting on respirators, gown and gloves (if required)
- Do not come out of the room with gown and gloves. When exiting the room you must take them off and clean your hands. To enter the room again, put on new gown and gloves
- Visitors should be limited to family members or close friends

**Ask the nurse if there are any questions**