

12.4 Patient and Family Droplet Precautions Information Sheet - English

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What are Droplet Precautions?

Germs are spread by large droplets that are produced when a person coughs or sneezes. These droplets are pushed a short distance through the air and settle in the eyes, nose or mouth of another person. Droplets generally travel 1 metre (3 feet) or less in distance and can settle on surfaces. This is called Droplet Transmission. Droplet Precautions help stop the spread of germs carried by droplet transmission.

What hospital procedures are used for Droplet Precautions?

- The patient may be given a private room. The door can be kept open. If the patient is not placed in a private room, the curtain may be drawn around the bed
- A sign will be placed on the door or cubicle curtain to let everyone know the special precautions required
- Staff will wear masks when they are within 1 metre (3 feet) of the patient
- Staff will take the patient out the room for medically essential purposes only
- Before entering or leaving the room all staff, patients and visitors will wash their hands with soap and water if visibly soiled, or use an alcohol-based hand rub

What can the patient do to help?

- Cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when they cough or sneeze, and throw the tissue away in the wastebasket in the room
- Stay in the room unless staff has approved leaving the room
- Put on a mask before leaving the room and keep it on at times when out of the room
- Wash hands with soap and water if visibly soiled, or use an alcohol-based hand rub
 - Before leaving the room
 - After coughing or sneezing
 - After going to the bathroom
 - Before eating

What should the visitors do?

- Read the sign on the door and discuss with staff on the precautions to follow:
 - They will be educated by staff if they are to wear and masks while in the room
- Ask the staff if they have any questions
- Wear masks as instructed by staff
- Wash their hands with soap and water if visibly soiled, or use an alcohol-based hand rub before entering or leaving the room
- Visitors should be limited to family members of close friends

Ask the nurse if there are any questions