

Infection Prevention & Control Fact Sheet

AIRBORNE PRECAUTIONS *for the General Public*

What are Airborne Precautions?

Germs can live in small particles that remain in the air for long periods of time and are moved around by air currents. People can breathe in the germs if they are in the same room as the person, or even if they are some distance away. This way of spreading germs is called airborne transmission. Airborne Precautions helps to stop the spread of germs carried by airborne transmission.

What happens when I am on Airborne Precautions?

- The person on Airborne Precautions will be given a private room. The door will be kept closed at all times, even if the person is not in the room.
- A sign will be placed on the door to let everyone know the special precautions are required.
- Staff and visitors will wear special masks called respirators while in the room.
- Staff will only take the person out of the room for medically essential purposes.
- Before entering or leaving the room, all staff, persons on Airborne Precautions and visitors will wash their hands with soap and water (if visibly soiled), or use alcohol-based hand rub.

What can the person on Airborne Precautions do to help?

- Keep the door closed at all times, even when they are not in the room.
- Stay in the room unless staff have approved leaving the room.
- If approved to leave the room, put on a medical mask before leaving the room and keep it on at all times when out of the room.
- Cover the nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and throw the tissue away in the garbage.
- Wash their 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 visitors do?

- Read the sign on the door and talk with the staff about what to do:
 - How to prevent spreading these germs and what the risks are
 - Staff will teach visitors how to wear the respirator while in the room.
- Wear the N95 respirator as instructed by staff.
- Be informed that although this is a N95 respirator the protection afforded by this respirator is at a reduced level as it has not been fit tested.
- Wash their hands with soap and water if visibly soiled, or use alcohol-based hand rub before entering or leaving the room.
- Visitors should be limited to family/household members, or close friends.

Ask the nurse if there are any questions